



2002-2003  
*Neighbourhood Renewal*  
2004-2005  
*Supporting People*

**BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**THE TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY**

**RESULTS**

**FEBRUARY 2004**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. Babergh DC is an excellent landlord. Babergh DC tenants are extremely pleased with their homes and the services provided by their landlord. 71% of tenants responded to this survey. The very high levels of tenant satisfaction are demonstrated in the following key findings:
  - 87.4% of tenants are satisfied overall with their landlord.
  - 91.8% of tenants find staff to be helpful.
  - 92% of tenants are satisfied with their accommodation.
  - 90% of tenants feel that Babergh DC kept them well informed.
  - 89.7% of tenants are happy with their area as a place to live.
  - 86.5% of tenants are satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service provided by their landlord.
  - Over 86% of tenants who had a repair completed in the last 12 months rated all aspects of the actual work as “good” or “very good”.
  - 86.9% of tenants are satisfied with the overall condition of their homes.
  - 84.8% of tenants feel that obtain good value for money from their rent.
  
2. Tenants rated their homes and the services provided by their landlord very highly throughout. No poor performance areas were found. Given the very high levels of satisfaction, inevitably there were some areas with slightly lower satisfaction levels.

- 84.6% of tenants found it easy to contact the right person at Babergh DC and the vast majority of tenants found staff to be helpful (91.8%). However, 8% stated that staff could not effectively deal with their particular problem and 16.5% were left dissatisfied with the outcome.
- While 68.9% of tenants thought some account was taken of their view when decisions are being made, 7.6% thought Babergh DC did not take tenants views into account. 23.6% of tenants have no opinion.
- Tenants satisfaction with the opportunities to be involved in the management of their home (BVPI) was at a lower level, compared to satisfaction with other services and facilities (55.3% “fairly” or “very” satisfied). Only 2.8% were actually dissatisfied, but there were a large number of tenants who have no opinion (23.9%) or are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (18.1%).
- Only 35.8% of tenants had heard of the Tenant Compacts and again satisfaction was at a lower level, compared to satisfaction with other services and facilities (66.9% satisfied). A large number of tenants have no opinion (15.7%) or are neither satisfied of dissatisfied (16.7%).
- Tenants did not rate the pre-commencement aspects of the repairs services as highly as the actual repair work. 11% of tenants thought the information they were given was poor and 12.9% of tenants thought the time it took before the work started was poor.
- Tenants reported some local problems, which will affect their enjoyment of their home and the environment, especially in Great Cornard. Overall problems with litter/rubbish (50.3%), vandalism (47.3%) and dogs (41.8%) were the most frequently reported problems.
- Older tenants are clearly the most satisfied group of tenants. One-parent families and multiple adult households are considerably less satisfied. 10.5% of one-parent families are dissatisfied with their landlord, 3.9% with the rent, 9.8% with their accommodation and 18.2% the condition of their property.

3. It is clear from the above that Babergh DC is an exceptional landlord with a high number of very satisfied tenants. There are few areas and opportunities where performance and service delivery can be improved. However, the following suggestions for enhancements have been indicated by the survey, and may deserve further attention, subject to Babergh DC's corporate planning and business priorities:

- A review of call handling, processing and “follow through” on initial contact may be desirable to establish reasons for tenant dissatisfaction after contact and why some tenants problems were insolvable. The reasons may be linked to high tenant expectations and an unrealistic view of what can be achieved by a landlord.
- Tenants satisfaction with the opportunities to be involved in the management of their home (BVPI) had lower levels of satisfaction compared to other services and facilities (55.3% “fairly” or “very” satisfied). This may involve more promotional work, changes to participation structures, and further consultation of a more qualitative nature (such as focus groups), to find out what the barriers to involvement are.
- Awareness of Tenant Compacts is low. This is obviously dependant on the work already carried out by Babergh DC, more work is needed to promote and publicise the Compacts.
- Tenants did not rate the pre-commencement aspects of the repairs service as highly. This may reflect differences in working practices, tenants expectations that can vary demographically and perhaps warrant a review of the service in these areas.
- Tenants reported some local problems, which will affect their enjoyment of their home and environment. This may involve addition analysis to identify the specific areas and working together with partnership agencies in those areas.

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## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **1.1 STATUS**

The STATUS questionnaire is endorsed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The STATUS questionnaire collects information used for two ODPM Best Value PI's:

- BVPI 74 – Satisfaction of tenants with overall service
- BVPI 75 – Satisfaction with participation for BME and Non BME groups

The STATUS questionnaire is designed to be used by social landlords to survey tenants in general needs and sheltered housing. It is designed to be a baseline survey, which can be repeated after a number of years, and allows for comparison of data between different social landlords, as an integral part of the Best Value regime.

### **1.2 AIMS OF THE SURVEY**

The survey was commissioned in line with Babergh DC's Best Value Plan. The aim of the survey was to generate a benchmark on tenant satisfaction, which would allow Babergh DC to:

- Compare performance as landlord with other social landlords using "STATUS"
- Inform decisions regarding the best value service reviews
- Track progress by repeating the exercise in the future

### **1.3 THE SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

#### **1.3.1 The Questionnaire**

The survey was based on the standard STATUS questionnaire. The Questionnaire comprised of 45 questions in the following categories:

- Information about the household (11 questions)
- Information about the housing and area (7 questions)
- Contact with landlord (7 questions)
- Repairs (4 questions)
- Communication and participation (5 questions)

- Additional comment (1 question)
- Background information (10 questions)

### 1.3.2 Sample

In September 2003 Babergh had 3658 tenants who fell within the groups appropriate for the STATUS survey. A sample of 2000 tenants were randomly selected from four sub-geographical sub-groups of tenants (Sudbury, Hadleigh, Great Cornard and Rural).

The sample size for the sub-groups to ensure that, where possible, at least 100 questionnaires would be returned from each group (working on a return rate of at least 40%). Having worked out the sample size required for each sub-group then the required number of tenants was randomly selected, as shown in the figure below.

<b>The sub-groups</b>			
<b>Sub group</b>	<b>Total No. of tenants</b>	<b>Surveyed</b>	<b>Percentage surveyed</b>
Sudbury	864	471	55
Hadleigh	473	256	54
Great Cornard	532	292	54
Rural	1,789	981	54
Total	3,658	2,000	55

### 1.3.3 The Survey

The survey took place during a six week period from 20<sup>th</sup> October 2003. Three individual mailings took place. Babergh DC undertook the first mailing, which consisted of a copy of the questionnaire, a covering letter and a reply-paid envelope. All questionnaires were returned to Babergh DC.

After two weeks, any tenant who had not responded was sent a reminder (covering letter, questionnaire and pre-paid envelope) asking them to complete the questionnaire. A second covering letter, questionnaire and reply-paid envelope were sent to tenants who had not returned the questionnaire after two weeks from sending the first reminder. The survey period ended on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2003 when the final questionnaires were sent for data entry

### 1.3.4 Response Rates

The overall response rate was 71% with 1,424 of the 2,000 questionnaires being returned.

Survey Period	Number of questionnaires returned	Response rate
After first mailout	815	41%
After first reminder	1316	66%
Close of survey	1,424	71%

### 1.3.5 Statistical Reliability

For the overall results, FEEDBACK aims at +/- 4% accuracy at the 95% confidence level. This means that, for example, if 35% of tenants answered, “yes” to a particular question, that there are 95 chances out of 100 that the correct figure for all your tenants will be between 31% and 39%. For the results when the data is analysed at group level, 1,424 responses were achieved. This response was high enough to be confident that figures quoted at group level are accurate within a +/-2% confidence interval.

The responses rate was also very good for all of the sub-groups, with hardly any difference in response in the urban areas (65% - 69%); tenants in the Rural area returned the most questionnaires (75%). The results for small sub-groups need to be reliable and within the +/-10% confidence interval. With the high response rates all the sub-groups fall within this criteria. For all the sub-groups the results are reliable within +/-2.7% and +/- 5.7%. The response rates and the confidence intervals for all the sub-groups are given in the table below.

Response rates of sub-groups					
Sub group	Total no. of tenants	Surveyed	No. who responded	% Response of those surveyed	Confidence interval
Sudbury	864	471	324	69%	+/-4.2%
Hadleigh	473	256	177	69%	+/-5.7%
Great Cornard	532	292	190	65%	+/-5.5%
Rural	1789	981	733	75%	+/-2.7%
Total	3658	2000	1424	71%	+/-2%

### 1.3.6 Weighting and Representatives

The raw data has been weighted to take into account any differences between the responses and the total population. The number of bedrooms was used to check the similarity between the returned questionnaires and the property stock for each sub-group (that is the “representativeness” of the response).

The response from each sub-group was then further weighted for analysis at group level to ensure that the results did not include undue influence from one particular sub-group, and that they reflected the composition of the whole of the tenant population.

At sub-group and group level analysis there was minimal weighting for each area as those that responded closely matched the profile of the overall stock.

<b>Representativeness of responses</b>										
No. of bedrooms	1 Bed		2 Bed		3 Bed		4 Bed		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total stock	797	21%	1336	38%	1450	39%	74	2%	3658	100%
Returned questionnaires	300	21%	543	38%	539	38%	25	2%	1424	100%

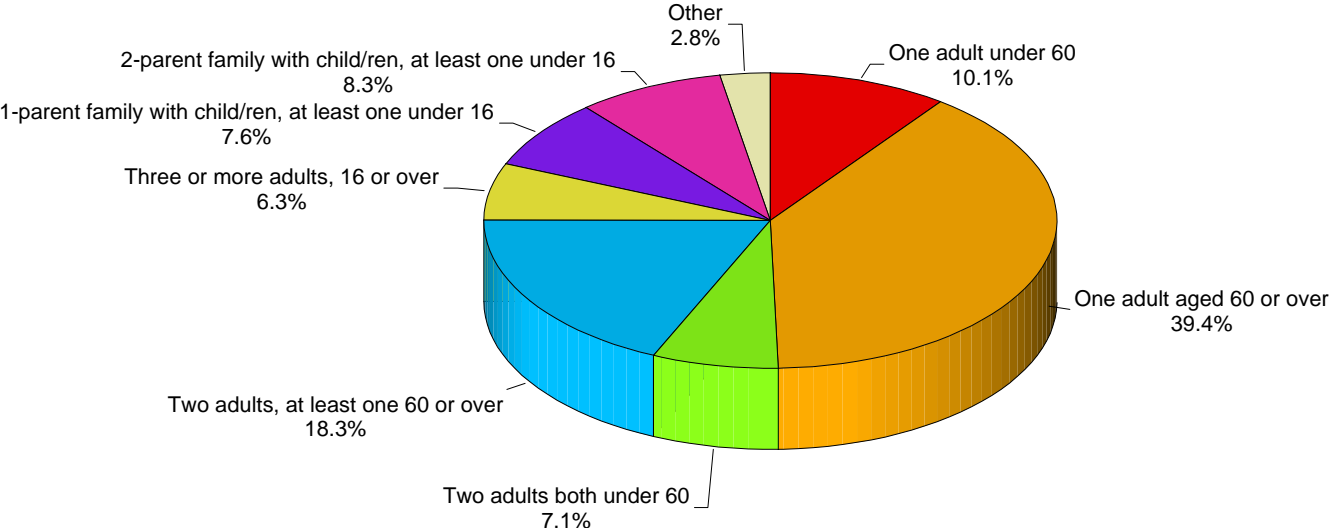
## 2. BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL TENANTS OVERALL

The following analysis of results can be taken to represent the views of all Babergh District Council tenants, and is accurate to within a margin of +/-2%.

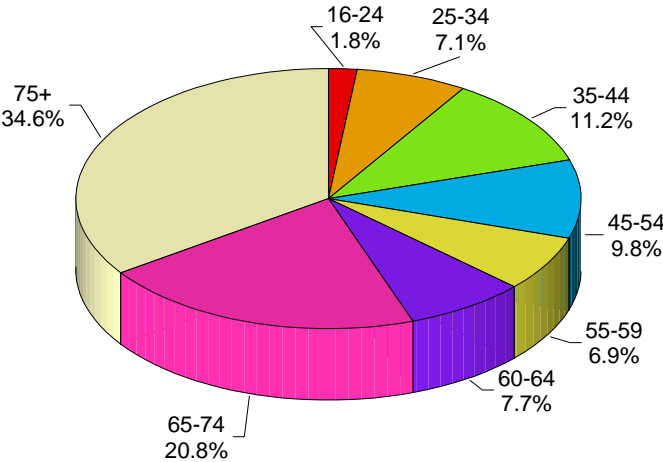
### 2.1 Tenant Profile

The majority of Babergh District Council tenants have been with the Council for a long time, 42.4% for more than 21 years. 19.2% of tenants had been with the Council for between 11 and 20 years. 13.2% of tenants have been with the Council for between 6 and 10 years, and a further 11.9% of the tenants had been tenants for between 3 – 5 years. Only 11.2% are relatively new to Babergh District Council and have been with the Council for less than two years.

In terms of household size, the average number of people living in a household was 1.8, with an average child density (under 16) of 0.3 per household and a density of 0.8 people per household aged over 60. The household composition is shown in the chart below. Babergh District Council houses a mix of tenants, the largest group of which are single older tenants (39.4%). Families are found in 15.8% of the homes (7.6% one-parent and 8.3% two-parent).

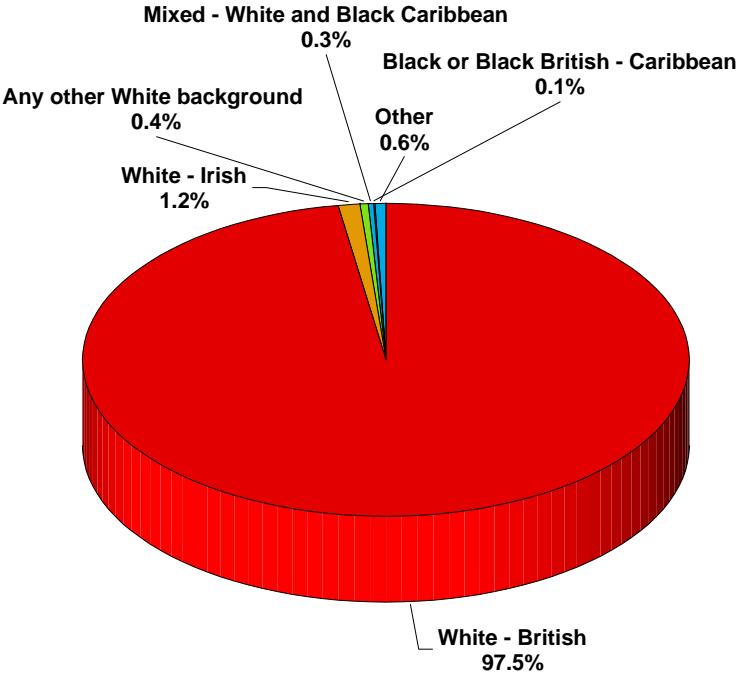


Babergh District Council tenants are aging; over half of the tenants are over retirement age (head of household). 14.6% of tenants are aged between 55 and 64, another 20.8% of tenants are aged between 65 and 74 years old and a further 34.6% are over 75 years old. Only 1.8% of tenants are less than 24 years old and 28.1% between 25 and 54 years old.

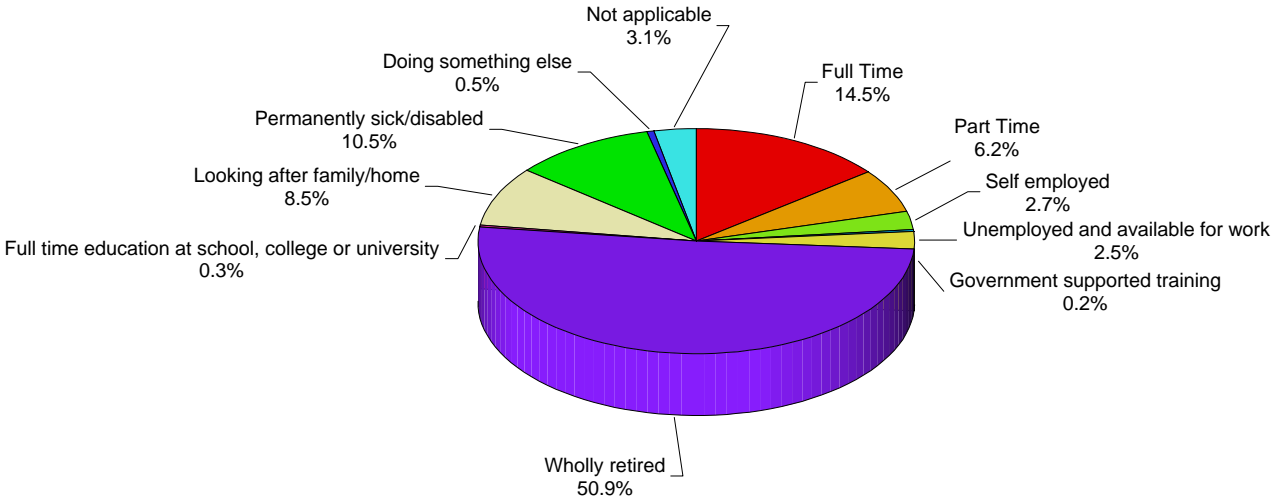


50.2% of households have a least one member who has a long-term illness, health problem or disability, of which 45% of tenants said it limited their daily activity. 10.6% of households have at least one member who uses a wheelchair.

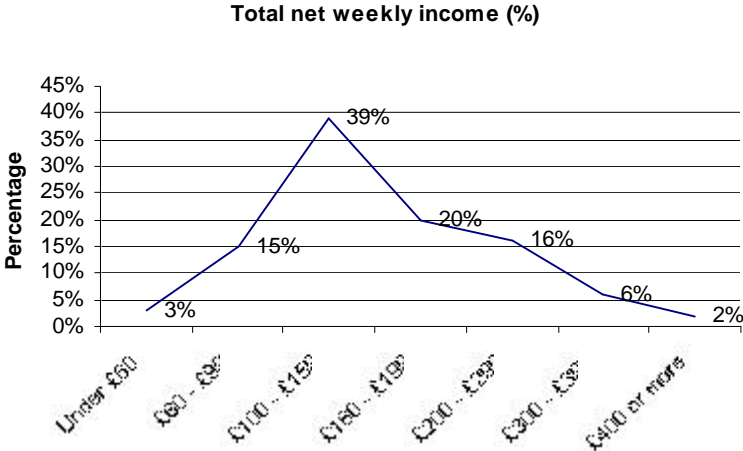
Nearly all Babergh District Council tenants are “White” (97.5% “White British, 1.2% “White Irish” and 1% “Other White”). The diversity is shown in the chart below.



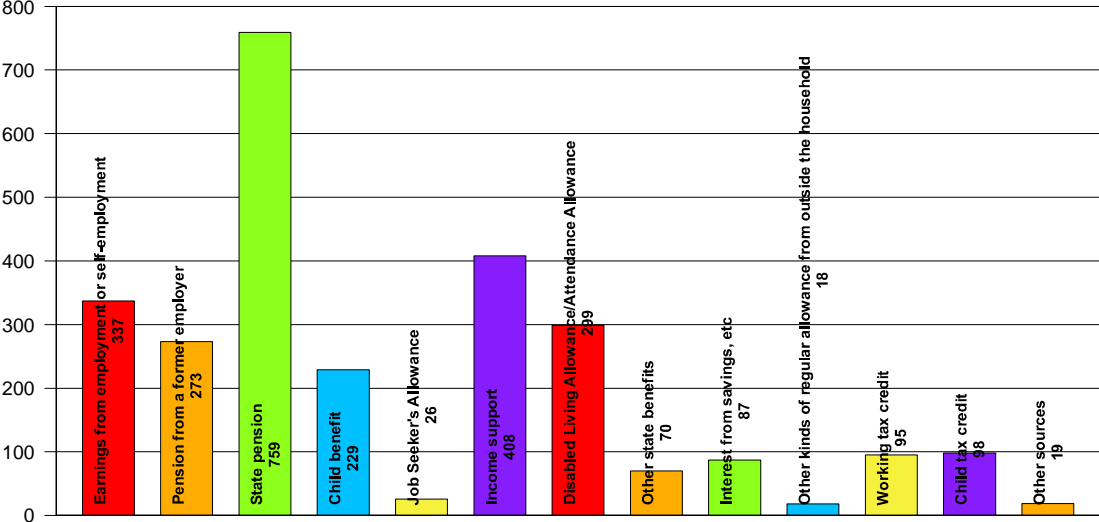
Over half of principal tenants are retired (50.9%), as are 38.3% of partners. 23.4% of principal tenants are in employment, 14.5% in full time employment, 6.2% in part-time employment and 2.7% self-employed. Where there is a partner or spouse in the household they are more likely to be working (19.9% full-time employment, 11.9% part-time and 3.5% self-employed). Unemployment for principal tenants is running at 2.5%, 8.5% at home looking after family and 10.5% permanently sick or disabled.



The graph below shows the distribution of the total net weekly income of tenants (tenant and partner – if applicable). Babergh District Council has more households with incomes under £100 per week (18.3%) and slightly more households on incomes between £100 and £160. Fewer households are on higher incomes. 23.6% of households have incomes over £200.



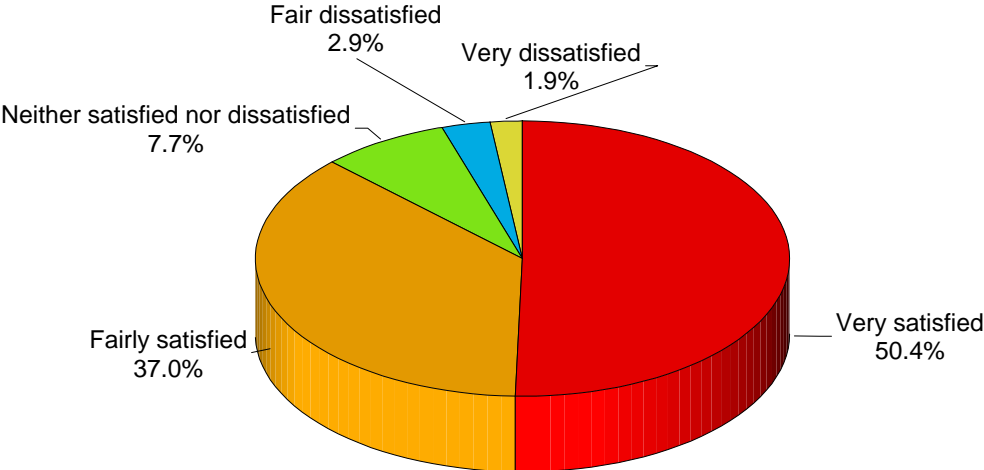
85.8% of tenants are on state benefits, 61.8% are wholly reliant on state benefits and another 24% of households are on partial state benefits. 14.2% receive no state benefits (excluding child benefit). Just under two-thirds of tenants receive housing benefit (59.4%), of which 44.2% are on full housing benefit and 18.7% on partial. The sources of income are shown in the table below.



With a high percentage of households comprising of older tenants it is not surprising that 27.9% of households receive a state pension and 10% receive a private or occupational pension. A quarter of households have a member in employment. Children under the age of 16, or under 18 if still at school, are found in 19% of households.

## 2.2 Satisfaction with Landlord

Babergh District Council tenants are highly satisfied with their landlord. Tenants were asked “Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord?” 87.4% of tenants are satisfied with their landlord, with 50.4% being very satisfied and 37% fairly satisfied. Only 4.8% of tenants are dissatisfied with their landlord, 2.9% fairly and 1.9% very dissatisfied. A small number of tenants (7.7%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

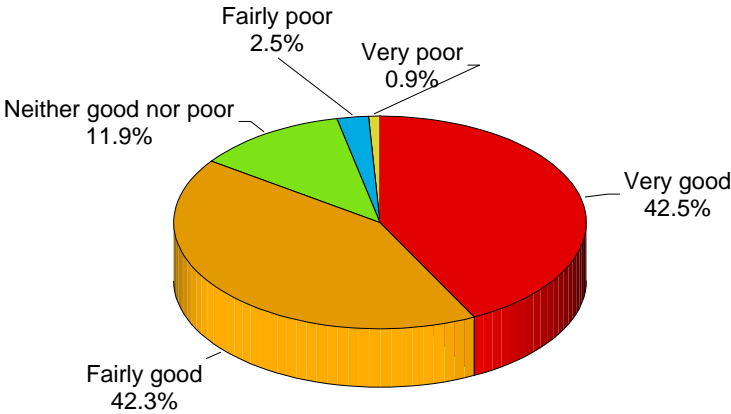


Older tenants are by far the most satisfied households, both single tenants (91.4%) and couples (84%). This is reflected in terms of economic status, where retired tenants are the most satisfied group of tenants with 92.7% “very” or “fairly” satisfied. Families are not as satisfied with their landlord. 10.5% of one-parent families are dissatisfied as well as 7% of three or more adult households.

Comparing the views in terms of length of tenancy also shows the satisfaction of the older tenants; satisfaction was highest amongst new tenants (92.3% under 1 year). Overall tenant satisfaction with the Council appeared to drop after the first year, 92.3% of new tenants are satisfied compared to 87.5% of tenants who have been with the Council for 1-2 years. Working tenants are marginally less satisfied with their landlord (82% full-time and 83.9% part-time workers), as are those at home looking after family (75.9% satisfied).

### 2.3 Value for Money

Tenants were asked, “Taking into account your home and the services your landlord provides, do you think that the rent for this property represents good or poor value for money?” 84.8% of the tenants thought the rent represented good value for money, 42.5% of the tenants thought it was “very good” and 42.3% of tenants thought it was “fairly good” value for money. 11.9% of tenants were indifferent and only 2.5% of tenants thought that the rent represented “poor” value for money and 0.9% “very poor” value for money.

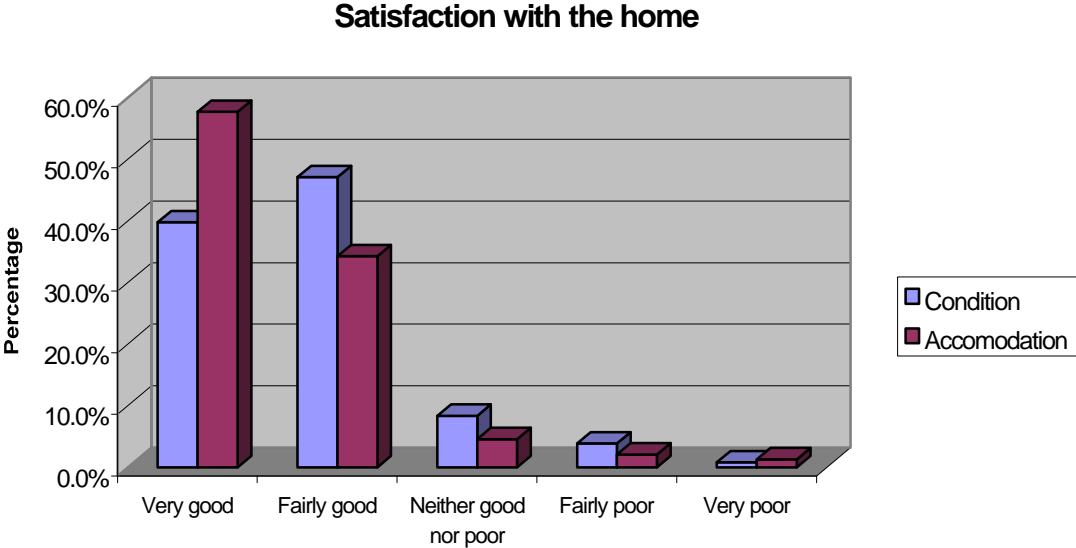


The most satisfied tenants are the single older tenants (90.4%) satisfied with the value for money), followed by older couples (89.1%). Two-parent families and three or more adult households are the least satisfied (73.7%) and 70.6% respectively). Not surprisingly, retired tenants are also highly satisfied with the value for money (89.5%). Tenants working full-time (77.1%) and part-time (85%) and those at home looking after family (74.1%) do not rate the value for money as highly as other tenants.

### 2.4 Quality and Condition of Home

A resounding 92% of tenants are satisfied with their accommodation (57.7% very satisfied and 34.3% fairly satisfied). Only 3.4% of tenants were dissatisfied (“fairly” or “very”) and 4.6% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Retired tenants are highly satisfied with their accommodation (95.7%). In terms of household composition, older tenants (95.5% single and 95.9% couples) are extremely satisfied with their accommodation. However, three or more adult households (82.6%) and especially one-parent families (84.4%) are not as satisfied. 9.8% of one-parent families are dissatisfied with their accommodation.

86.9% of tenants are satisfied with the general condition of their property, 39.8% of tenants said it was “very good”, 47.1% “fairly good”, with only 4.7% rating the general condition as “fairly poor” or “very poor”. 8.4% of tenants rated their property as neither good nor poor. It is the same groups of tenants who are the most satisfied – older tenants (91.9%). And again, it is the three or more adult households (81.4%) and one (71.7%) and two-parent (71.9) families who are not as satisfied.

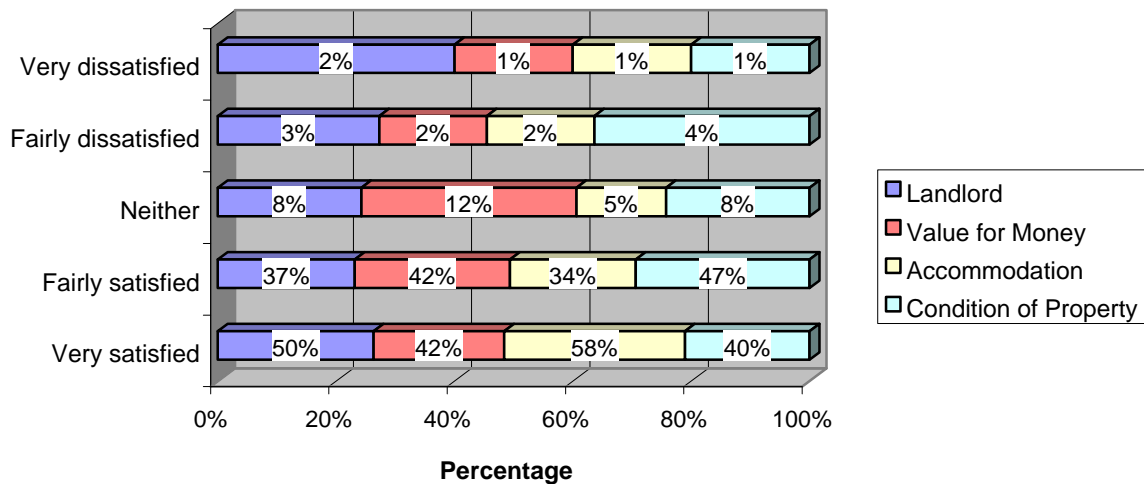


Tenants were asked, "Do you think the number of rooms you have in your home is too few, too many or about right?" 85.1% of tenants believed their home had enough rooms, however, 13% thought there were too few. Not enough rooms are more of an issue for two-parent families 36.8%, and those at home looking after family (34%). Tenants who have been with Babergh DC for between 3 and 10 years would also like more rooms (47.2%). Tenants on higher incomes want more rooms – 17.6% on incomes between £200 and £299 per week. Just 1.9% tenants said they had too many rooms.

**2.5 Overall Satisfaction**

The table below shows the differences in levels of satisfaction between the four satisfaction questions. Clearly most of Babergh DC tenants are extremely satisfied. Babergh DC tenants are most satisfied with their accommodation (92% satisfied), followed closely by the condition of their property (86.9%). Satisfaction with the value for money (84.8%) was slightly lower but still very high. A small, but significant number of tenants are dissatisfied with ratings, between 3% and 4% for all measures. Also, between 5% and 12% of tenants are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and should not be forgotten.

### Overall satisfaction (%)

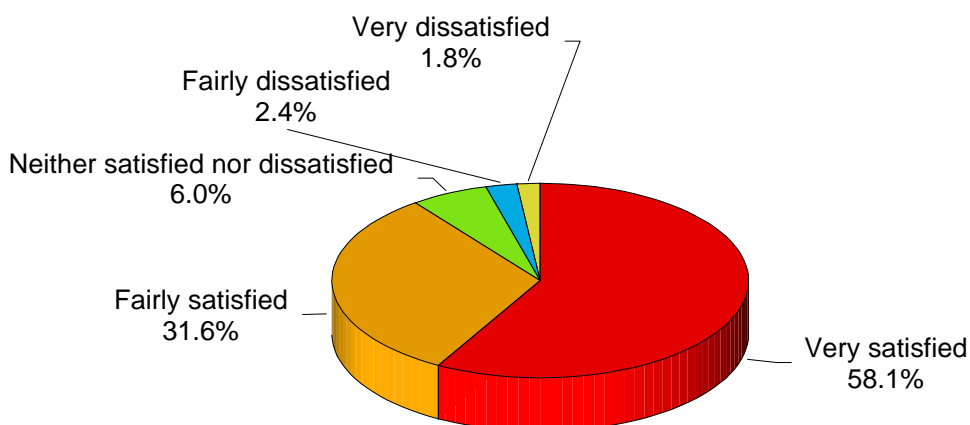


### 2.6 Satisfaction with Area and Local Problems

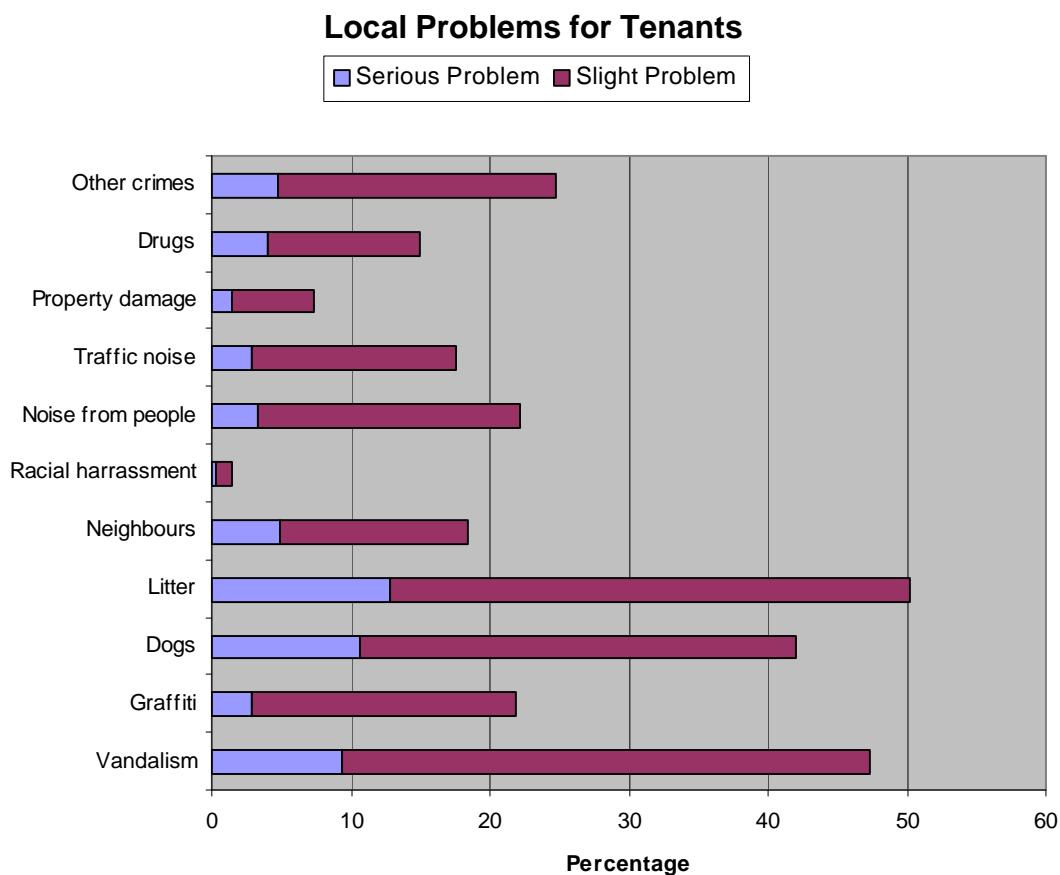
Satisfaction with the area is equally high with 89.7% of tenants satisfied (58.1% "very" and 31.6% "fairly"). Older tenants are significantly more satisfied with the area than any other type of households, retired tenants (93.8%) and those that are self employed (88.6%). New tenants (92.5%) and the longer established tenants (92.3% more than 21 years) are also more satisfied with the area than mid-term tenants.

Only 4.2% of tenants are dissatisfied with the area they live in, with 2.4% being fairly dissatisfied and 1.8% of tenants very dissatisfied. 6% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Tenants who are dissatisfied include one-parent families (8.6%), older couples (6.1%) and unemployed tenants (15.2%).

### How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live?



Tenants were asked to rate how serious they thought a range of problems/issues were in their area.



Litter/rubbish in the street, dogs and vandalism were the most widespread problems. Tenants found litter (50.3%) and dogs (41.8%) a problem, while 47.3% of tenants had problems with vandalism. No other problems were reported by more than 25% of tenants. However, a range of issues were reported by between 6% and 19% of tenants (other crimes, noise from people, graffiti, neighbours, traffic noise and drug related problems). Property damage and racial harassment were reported by far fewer tenants (7.3% and 1.5% respectively).

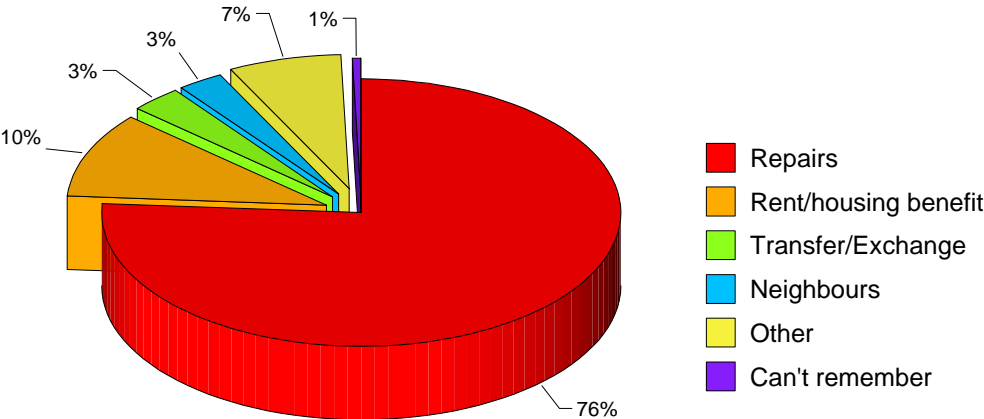
## 2.7 Contact with Landlord

Two thirds of tenants (67.1%) had contact with their landlord in the last 12 months. Younger couples (79.5%), single older tenants (61.3%), two-parent families (86.3%), those at home looking after the family (87.8%), part-time workers (82.7%) and unemployed tenants (80%) contacted their landlord the most. Single older tenants (39.6%) and mid-term (6-10 years) tenants (30.3%) contacted their landlord the least in the last 12 months. Tenants on incomes of over £300 (83.1%) contacted their landlord more frequently than those on incomes of £60 - £100 (60.1%).

When contacting their landlord the majority of tenants telephone Babergh DC (84.3%). A small number of tenants visited the office (10.2%) and 3% wrote. Tenants who visited the office the most were single older adults (16.9%), new tenants - under 1 year (26.5%) and unemployed tenants (16.7%).

The main reason tenants contacted their landlord was to report a repair (76.1%). 10.4% of tenants contacted Babergh DC for rent or housing benefit queries. Other reasons for contacting Babergh DC listed in the survey were transfer or exchange (3.2% of queries) and neighbours issues (2.8% of queries). 7% of tenants contacted their landlord for alternative reasons. Longer term tenants (37%), single older adults (32%) and unemployed tenants (25%) tended to have more rent and housing benefit queries. While single older adult households (35%), mid-term tenants (33% 1-5 years), those looking after the family home (7%) and the sick or disabled tenants (4%) were interested in a transfer or exchange.

Reason for contacting Babergh District Council

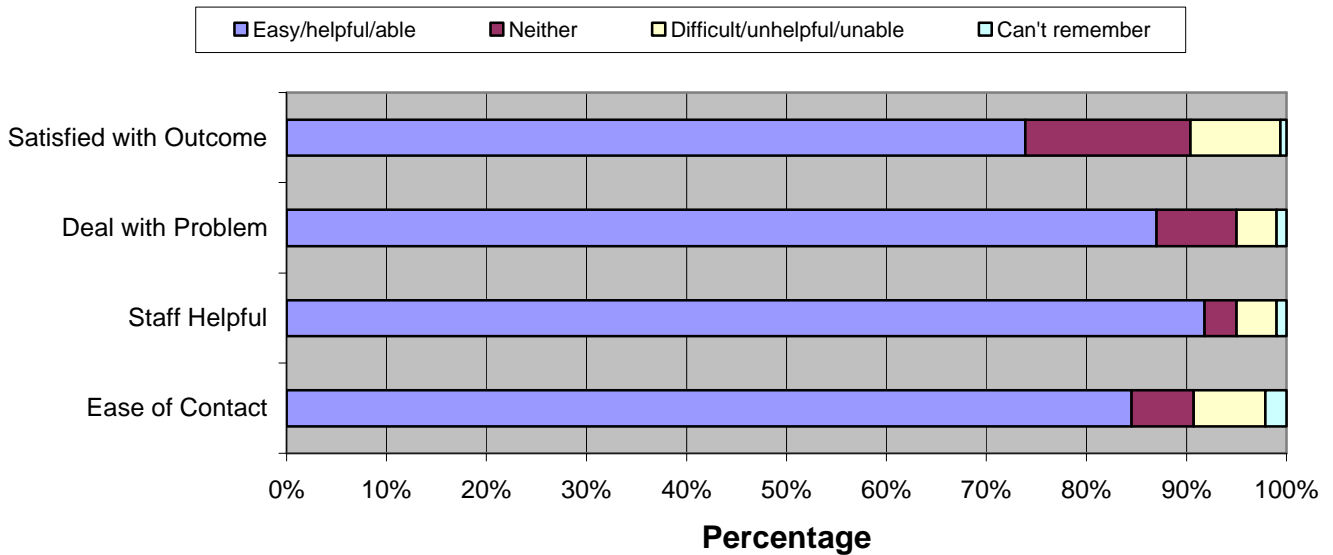


**2.8 Quality of Contact**

The vast majority of tenants found that getting hold of the right person was easy (84%), while a small number of tenants found it difficult (6%). The remainder of tenants either could not remember (2%) or found it neither easy nor difficult to contact the right person (7%). Once the staff had been contacted an impressive 91% of tenants found them to be helpful, with only 3% of tenants saying staff were unhelpful (4% neither).

86% of tenants found the staff able to deal with the problem. Again there was a small but significant number of tenants who said staff were unable to solve their problem (8%). Nearly three quarters of tenants were satisfied with the outcome of contacting their landlord (73%), however, 16% of tenants were left dissatisfied with the final outcome.

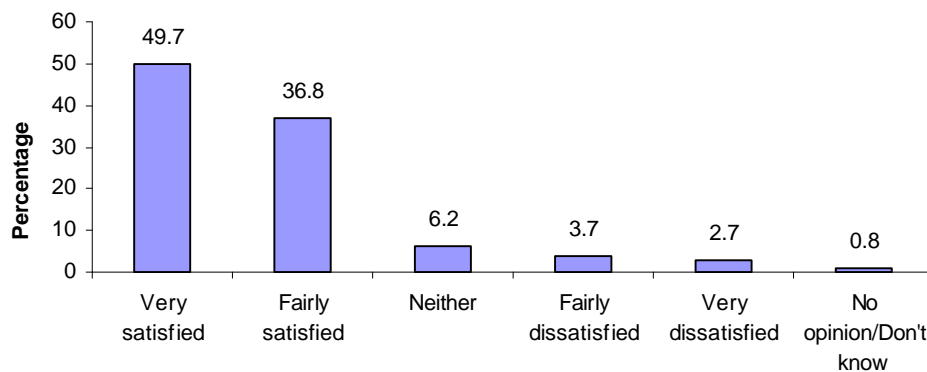
### Contact with Landlord (%)



## 2.9 Repairs and Maintenance

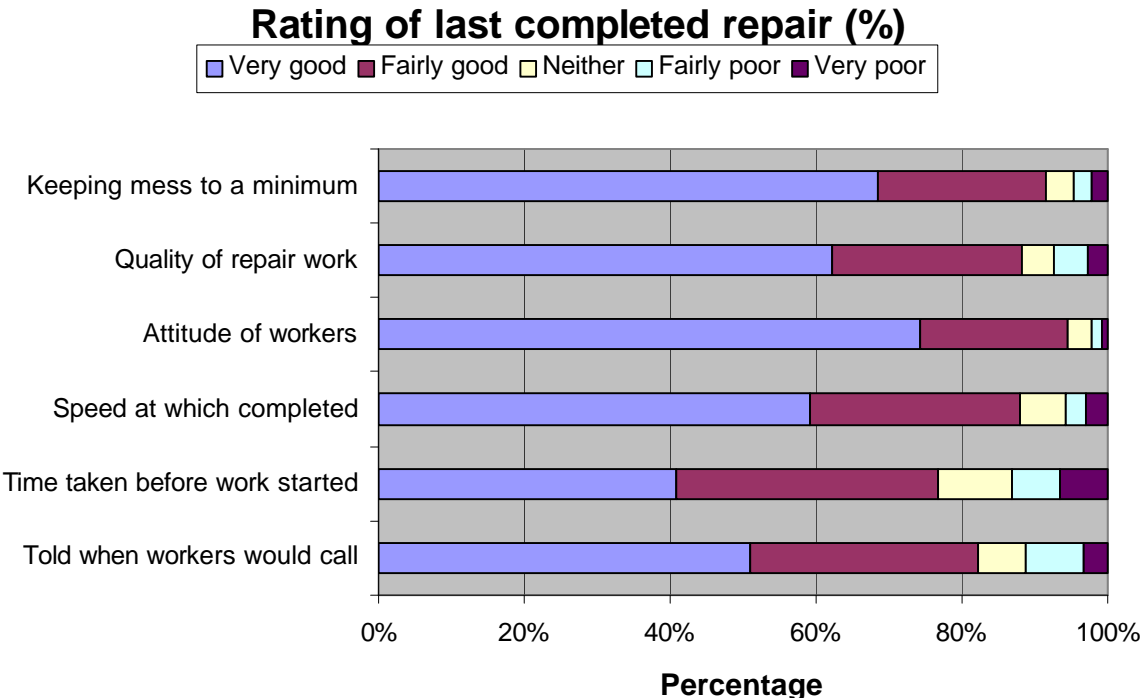
Tenants were asked how satisfied they were with the repairs and maintenance service. The majority of tenants are satisfied (49.7% "very" and 36.8% "fairly"). Only 6% of tenants are dissatisfied (3.7% "fairly" and 2.7% "very"), while 1% hold no opinion either way.

### Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance (%)



67% of tenants had reported a repair in the last 12 months. Tenants who had had a repair completed in the last 12 months (65.2%) were asked a series of questions regarding the repair. Tenants rated all aspects of the repairs service very highly, with the attitude of the workers and keeping dirt to a minimum achieving the highest ratings (93% and 91% respectively). 88% of tenants were also satisfied with the quality of the work and the speed at which the work was completed was rated as good by 88% of tenants.

The pre-commencement work was also rated highly, 76% of tenants were satisfied with the information they were given and 13% of tenants thought that the pre-commencement works were poor - 6% were dissatisfied with the information they were given and 11% thought the work should have commenced earlier.



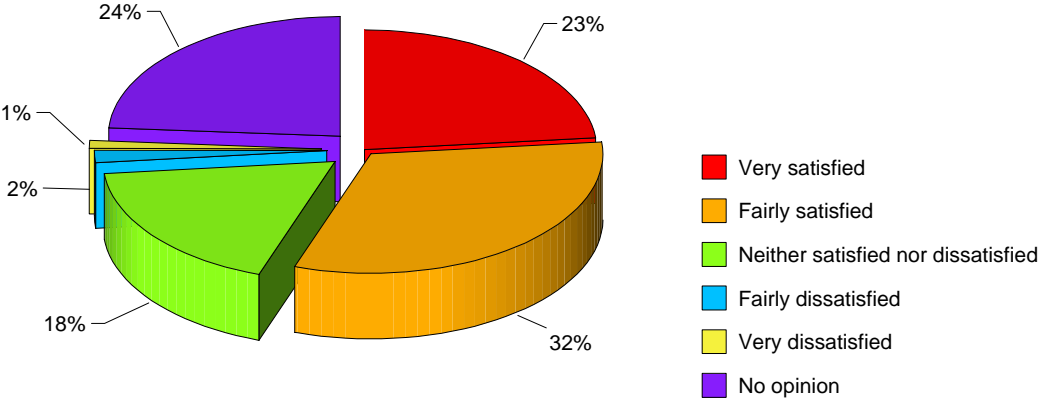
**2.10 Communication and Participation**

Babergh DC is doing an excellent good job in keeping its tenants informed. Tenants were asked, "Generally, how good or poor do you feel your landlord is at keeping you informed about the things that might affect you as a tenant?" 90% of tenants said they were kept well informed (52.9% "very good" and 37.2% "fairly good"). Only 2.5% of tenants did not think they were kept informed (1.2% "fairly poor" and 1.3% "very poor") and 7% had were not sure (neither).

When asked, "How much account do you feel your landlord takes of tenants' views when making decisions?" 35% percent of tenants said Babergh DC took a lot of account of tenant's views and 34% "a little". Only 8% said Babergh DC took no account at all of tenants' views. 23% of tenants had no opinion on the question.

When tenants were asked, "How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in management and decision-making?" 55% of tenants were satisfied, while just 3% were dissatisfied. 18% of tenants said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 24% did not have an opinion.

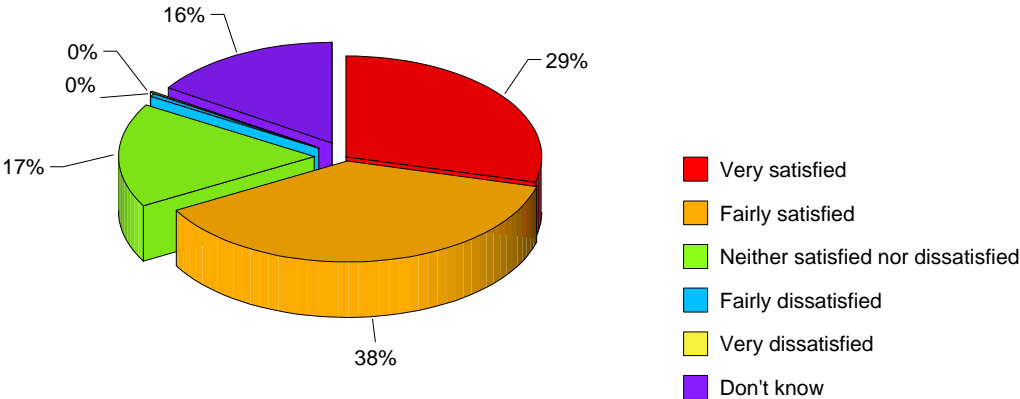
**Satisfaction with opportunities for involvement in management and decision-making**



**2.11 Tenant Compacts**

Tenants' Compacts are a relatively new initiative, only 36% of tenants had heard of them. However, satisfaction with those who had heard of them was fairly high, 67% "very" or "fairly" satisfied, with very few tenants dissatisfied (1%). 16% had no opinion and 17% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

**Satisfaction with Tenants Compacts**

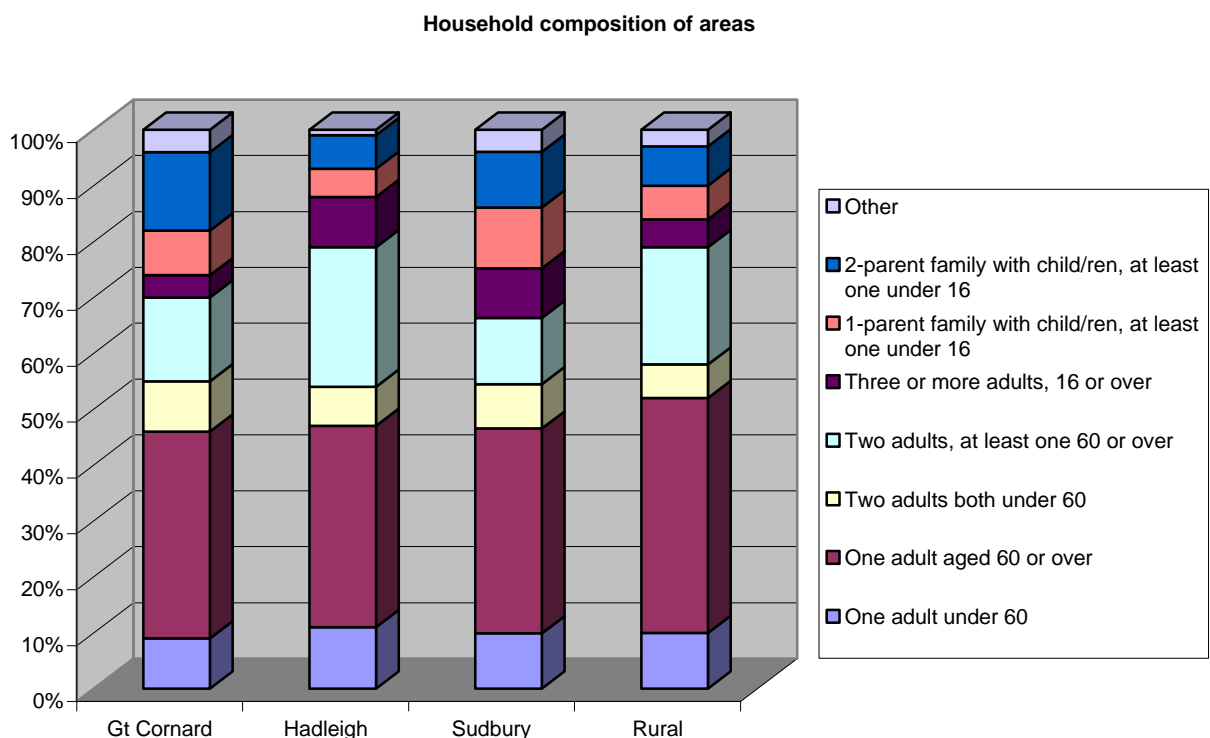


### 3. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE AREA SUB-GROUPS

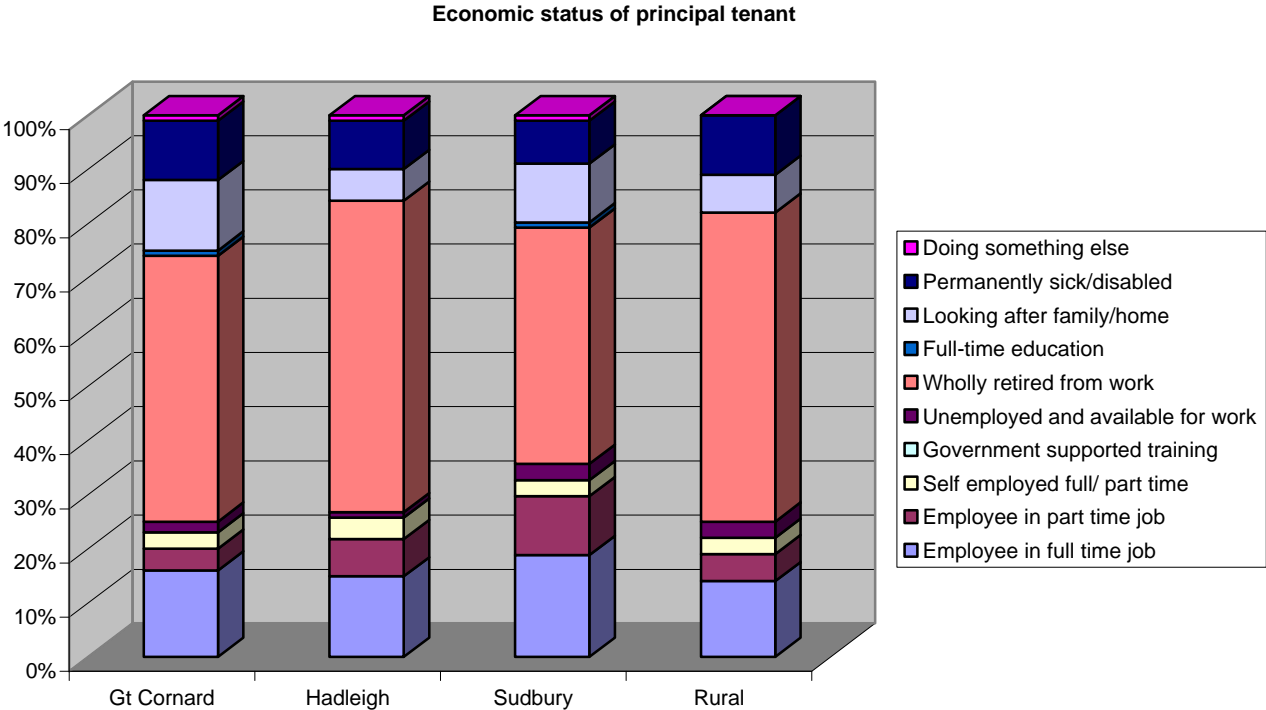
This section of the report looks at significant differences between the four sub-groups chosen in this survey. Slight differences in the demographic profile of tenants and their satisfaction levels are recorded. It is also worthwhile remembering that differences between the satisfaction levels of the sub-groups can be due to demographics rather than any geographical difference. Older tenants, as shown in the previous chapter, are the most satisfied group of tenants and areas with high percentages of older tenants can have correspondingly higher satisfaction ratings.

#### 3.1 Tenant profile

There are some variations in the household demographics between the areas. All four sub-groups contain roughly the same number of households (13% - 49%) and it is the variation in numbers of families and older tenants that set them apart. Sudbury and Hadleigh are very similar, both having 47% of households occupied by older tenants. However, Sudbury has slightly more families living in the area (21% compared to 11% in Hadleigh). The Rural area has the highest percentage of older tenants of the four sub-groups (52%) and the lowest number of families (13%). Great Cornard, on the other hand, has the lowest number of older tenants (46%) and the highest number of families (22%).



Employment was at its highest in Sudbury (33%) and at its lowest in the rural area (22%) for principal tenants. It is worth noting that where a tenant had a partner or spouse there was a tendency for them to be more likely to be in employment than the person completing the questionnaire; details of this are in the accompanying tables. 24% of principal tenants in Great Cornard are outside official unemployment “at home looking after the family” or “suffering from illness/disability”, compared to 19% in Sudbury, 18% in the rural areas and 15% in Hadleigh. 58% of the households in Hadleigh are retired, compared to 57% in the rural areas, 49% in Great Cornard and 44% in Sudbury.



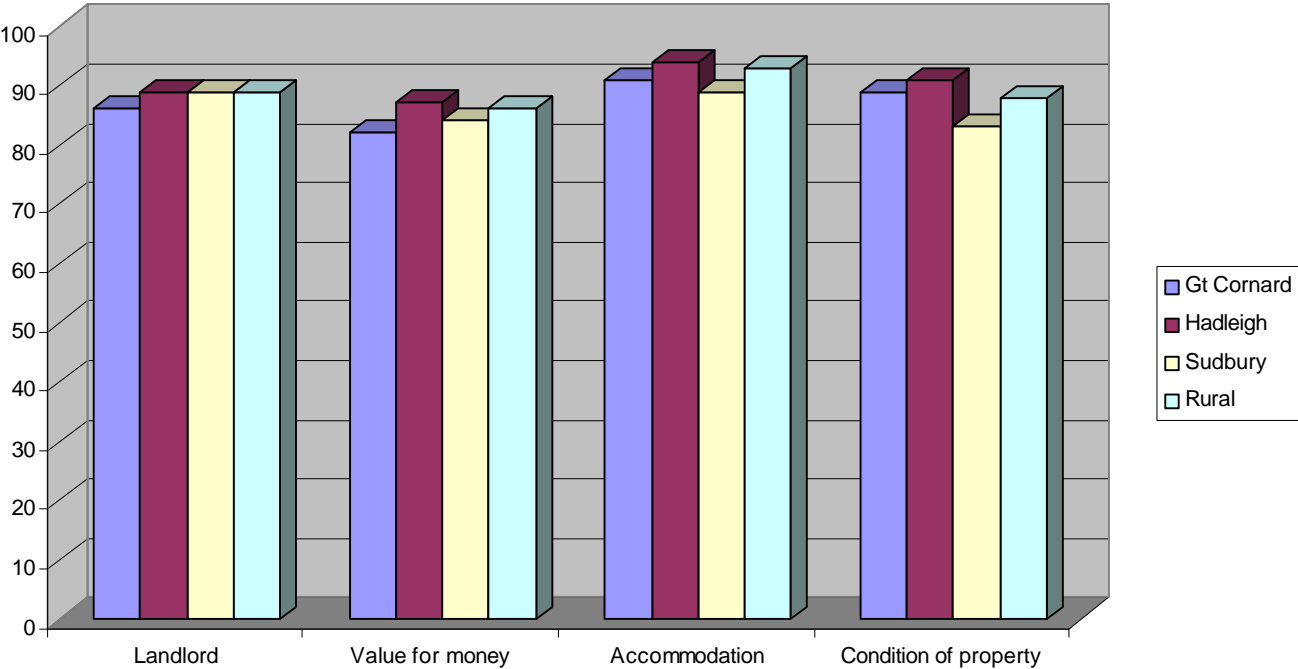
Great Cornard and Hadleigh are slightly more affluent with 28% of tenants on incomes over £200 per week compared to 22%-26% in the other areas. These areas also have fewer tenants on incomes under £100 per week (12%-15% compared to 20% - 21%). Sudbury has the lowest number of tenants wholly on state benefits (56%) compared to 61% - 64% in the other areas. All areas have between 54% and 68% of households on housing benefit.

**3.2 Overall satisfaction**

Overall Babergh DC tenants are extremely satisfied with their landlord, the value for money their rent obtains, their accommodation and the condition of their property. The accommodation was the highest rating (94%), followed by the condition of the property (91%) and then the landlord (89%). Satisfaction with value for money was slightly lower (87%).

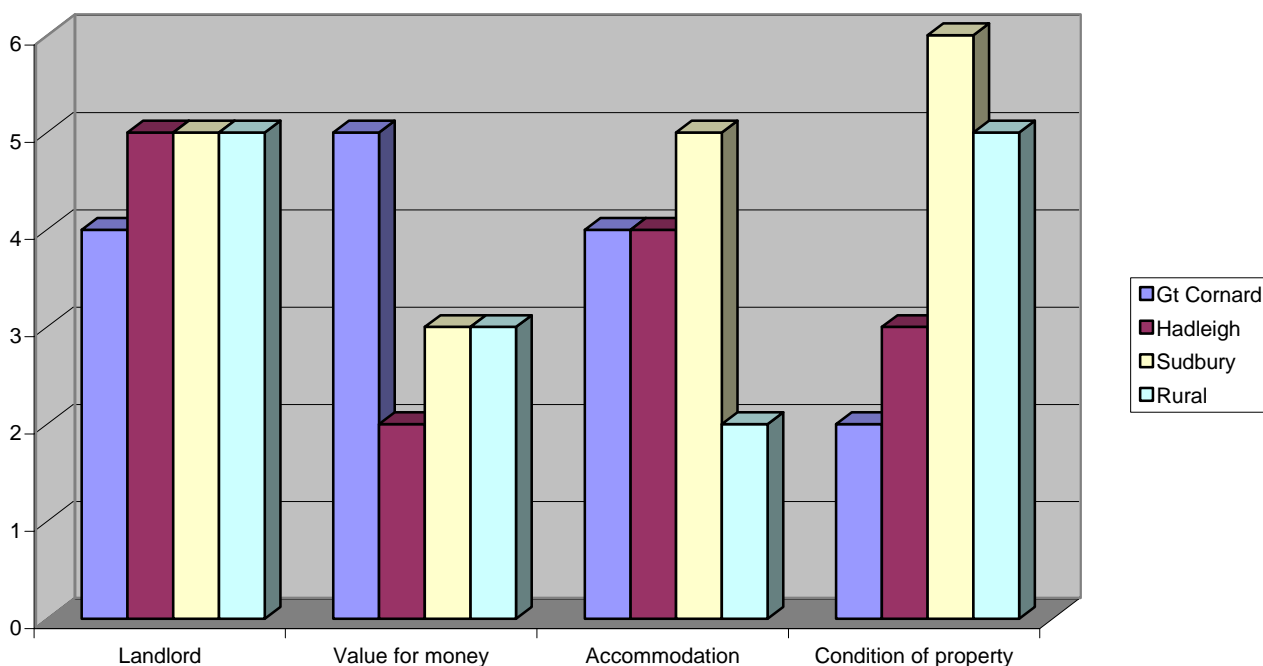
There were only minor differences in the levels of satisfaction between the four areas; these are shown in the figure below. The table includes tenants who were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied. Tenants living in Hadleigh, followed by tenants living in the rural area, are the most satisfied. Hadleigh tenants gave the highest ratings for all measures, apart from the landlord where Hadleigh shared the same level of satisfaction with Sudbury and the rural areas (89%). Tenants in Sudbury gave the lowest rating for condition of property and accommodation measures (83% - 89% respectively) and tenants in Great Cornard gave the lowest rating for value for money and the landlord (82% and 86% respectively).

Satisfaction by area (% "Fairly" and "Very")



Overall relatively few Babergh DC tenants are dissatisfied, with dissatisfaction contained at or below 6% in all cases. However, as can be seen from the figure below, slightly more tenants in Sudbury are dissatisfied with their landlord, accommodation and condition of property. While it is the tenants in Great Cornard that are most dissatisfied with the value for money (5%).

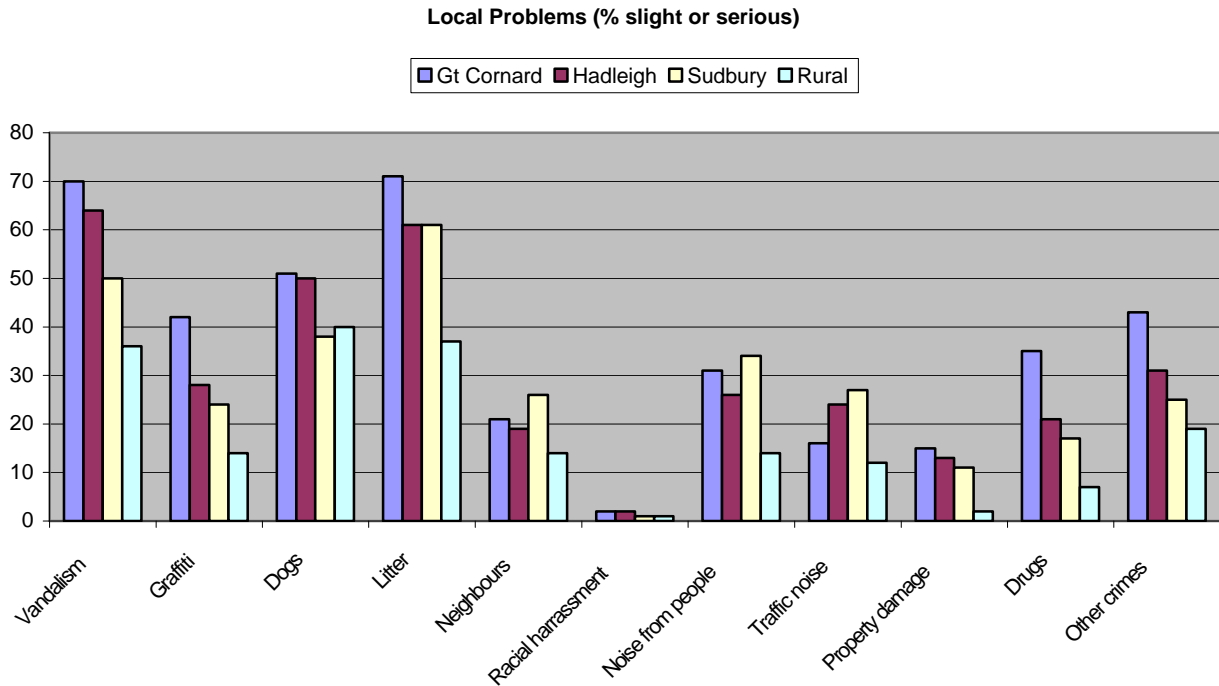
Dissatisfaction by area (% "Fairly" and "Very")



### 3.3 Areas and Local Issues

Overall 87% of Babergh DC tenants are satisfied with the area they live in and just 5% are dissatisfied. Looking at the satisfaction with the area by sub-group reveals a totally different picture. Satisfaction with the area is very high in the rural areas (95%), followed by high rating of tenants living in Hadleigh (87%) and Sudbury (84%). Tenants in Great Cornard are not as satisfied with their area (82%) and 8% are dissatisfied.

Within Babergh DC, tenants reported different local problems affecting the quality of their environment and areas. In general terms, litter, dogs and vandalism presented the worst problems. Tenants living in the rural areas are much happier with their environment, recording half as many problems as tenants in Great Cornard.



Tenants living in Great Cornard, the worst affected area, reported the highest levels of all local problems except neighbours, noise from people and traffic noise. In particular litter/rubbish (71%), vandalism (70%) and dogs (51%) are the most reported issues. Despite having the second highest number of tenants satisfied with the area, Hadleigh was regarded as the second worst area in terms of local problems. In Sudbury, tenants reported higher than average levels for neighbours, noise from people and traffic. While tenants in the Rural area reported below average levels for all measures apart from problems with dogs, which was equal to the average level.

### 3.4 Contact with landlord

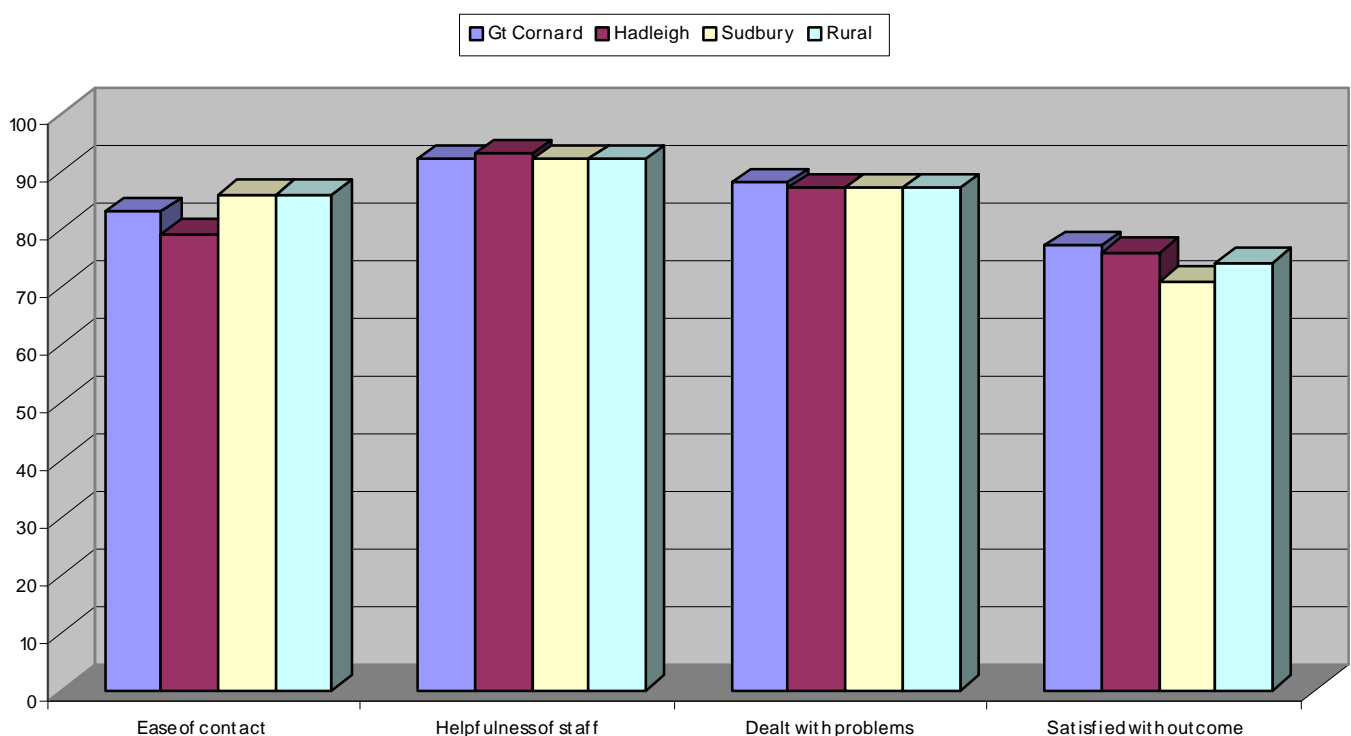
Tenants in the Rural area and those living in Sudbury did not contact the Council as often as tenants in Great Cornard and Hadleigh, perhaps reflecting some of the dissatisfaction noted above. The phone was the overwhelmingly most popular way to make contact, especially tenants living in Great Cornard (92%), Sudbury (89%) and the Rural area (85%). The offices were popular for tenants in Hadleigh (26%).

Repairs were the most common reason for all areas for contact and accounted for between 74% and 82% of the contact from all areas, with fewer tenants in the rural areas enquiring about repairs (74%) than in Great Cornard (82%). 4% of tenants in Sudbury and Hadleigh contacted their landlord regarding transfer or exchange. 9% of tenants in Hadleigh made contact regarding other issues – slightly more than in other areas.

Tenants perceptions about contact with Babergh DC (getting hold of the right person, the helpfulness of staff, the ability of staff to deal with the problem and satisfaction with the final outcome) varied slightly between the sub-groups. Generally tenants in Great Cornard rated their contact higher than tenants living in other areas, giving the highest ratings in two of the four measures - 88% found staff able to deal with their problem and 77% satisfied with the outcome. Tenants in Hadleigh said the staff were helpful (93%) and rated the ability to deal with problems and satisfaction with the outcome as the second highest. The rural area, Sudbury and Hadleigh tenants rated the ability of staff to deal with their problems nearly as high as those in Great Cornard.

Tenants in Hadleigh did not rate their communication with their landlord quite as highly, rating the ease of contacting the Council, their ability to deal with the problem the lowest. However, they came second in terms of satisfaction with the final outcome.

**Satisfaction with contacting Landlord (%)**

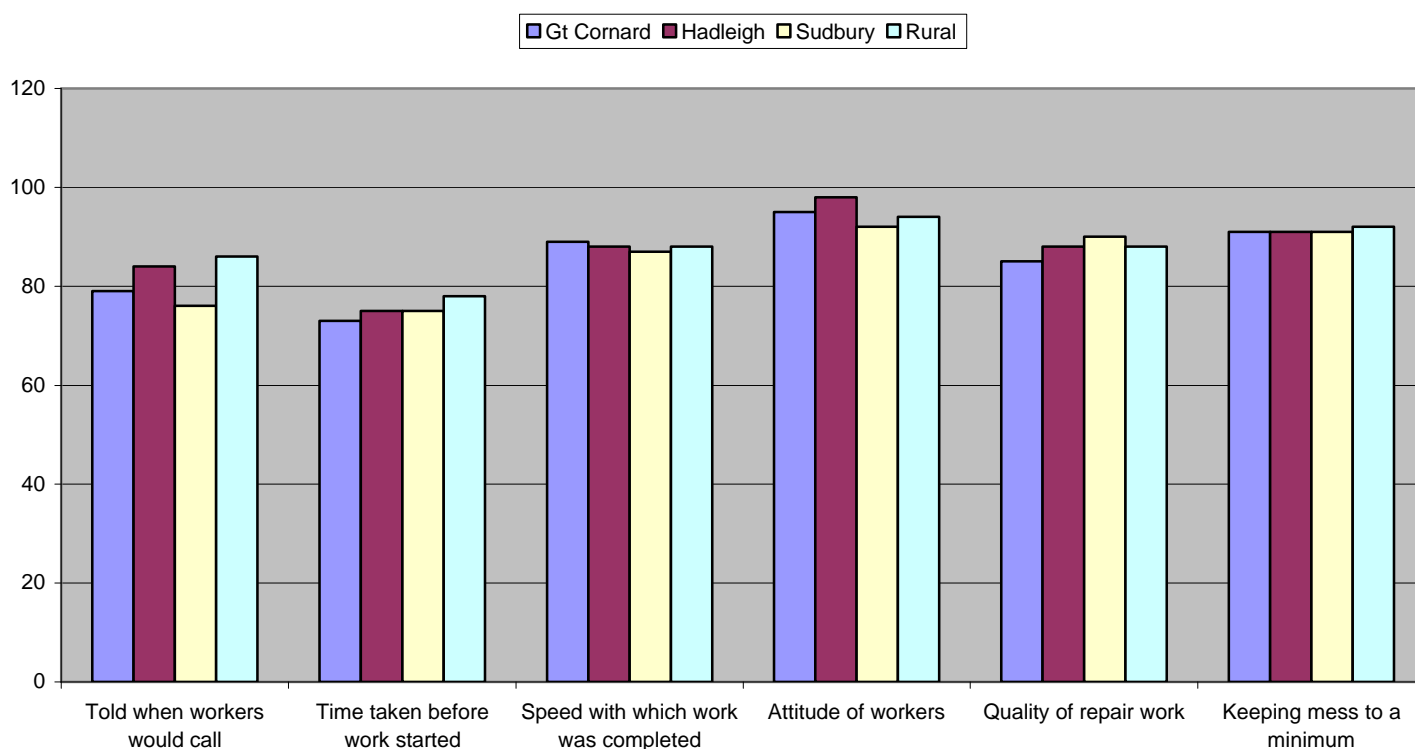


### 3.5 Repairs

Again there are differences between areas as regards tenants use of and opinion of the repairs service. Between 65% and 73% of tenants in each area reported repairs over the last twelve months, and completed in the last twelve months. In terms of overall satisfaction with the service the rural area tenants (88%) are slightly more pleased than tenants in Hadleigh (87%). Tenants in Great Cornard and Sudbury are not as satisfied (85%).

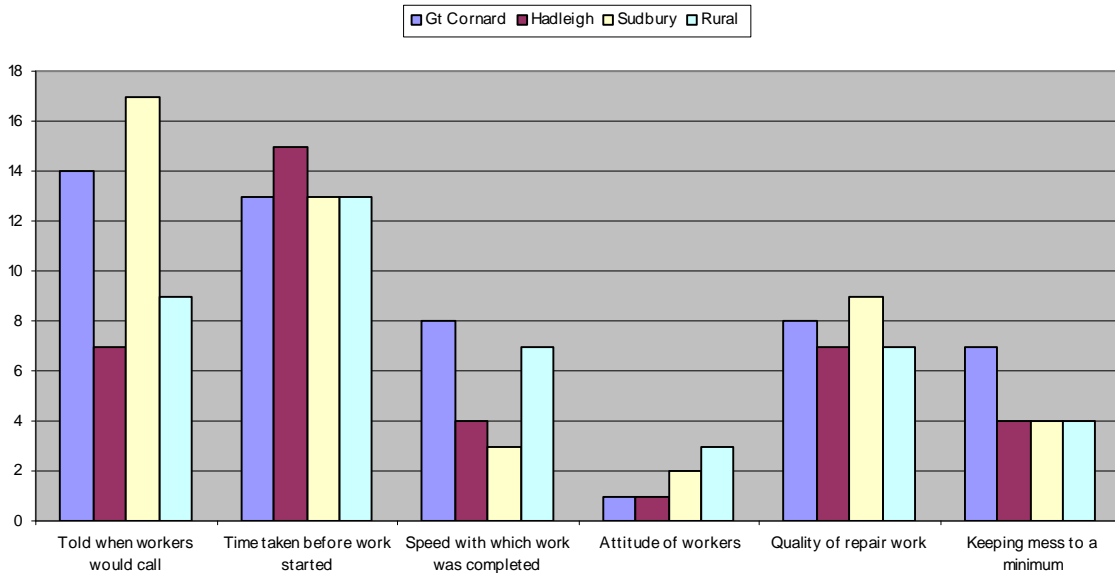
In general, across the sub-groups, there are higher ratings of satisfaction with the repairs service. Tenants from the four areas rated the repairs service very highly.

Satisfaction with the repair service (% fairly and very good)



Babergh DC is doing an exceptionally good job with the repairs service.

**Dissatisfaction with the repair service (% fairly or very poor)**

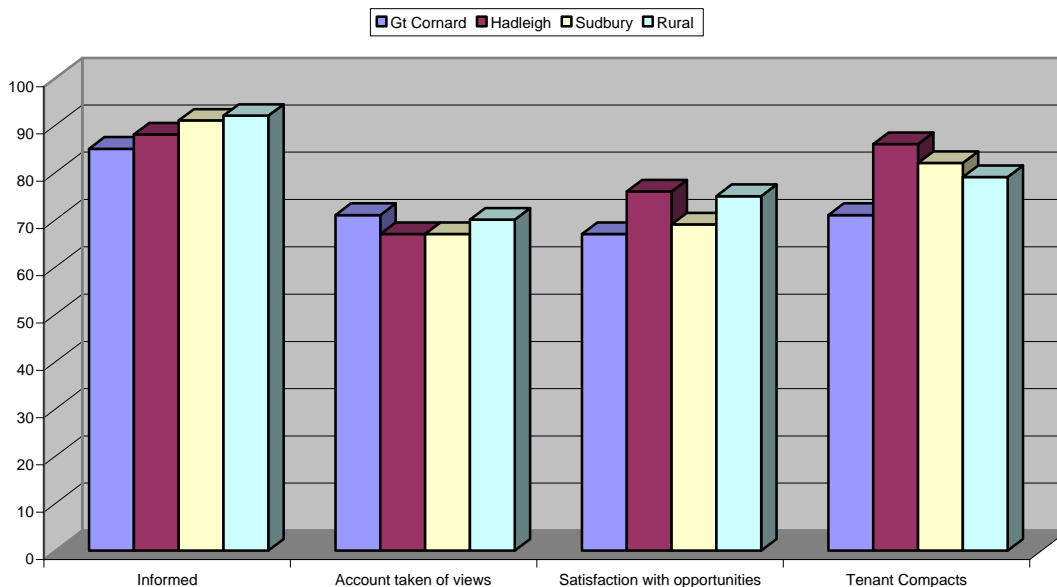


### 3.6 Communication and participation

Across the whole Council 89% of tenants said Babergh DC was good at keeping tenants informed. Tenants living in the rural area feel the most informed (92%), followed by tenants in Sudbury (91%). There was slightly less enthusiasm for the suggestion that tenants views were taken account in decision-making (69% average) with little difference between the areas (67% - 71%).

There was a reasonable level of satisfaction with opportunities for involvement in managements (average 72% overall), many ‘neutrals’ coding ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’, and little dissatisfaction in this field. There was only a slight difference between areas – with tenants in Hadleigh (76%) the most satisfied and tenants in Great Cornard the least satisfied (67%). Satisfaction with tenant compacts also varied slightly with slightly more tenants in Hadleigh (86%) satisfied than those in the Great Cornard (71%).

**Satisfaction with communication and tenant involvement**



#### 4. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The STATUS questionnaire contains two Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs) as specified by the ODPM.

Best Value Performance Indicators		
Number	BVP174	BVP175
Type	Quality	Fair access
Indicator	Satisfaction of tenants with the overall service provided by their landlord.	Satisfaction of tenants with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord.
Definition	Percentage stating that they are very or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord.	Percentage stating that they are very or fairly satisfied with the opportunities for participation in management and decision-making
Text included in Babergh District Council survey	Q11. Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by your landlord?	Q31. Thinking about the housing services that your landlord provides, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in management and decision-making?
Percentage	87%	73%

(note the percentage for Q31 and Q33 are calculated by excluding tenants who had no opinion.)

## **5. CONCLUSION**

### **Introduction**

The survey of Babergh District Council using the STATUS questionnaire has been extremely successful; both in terms of the opinions that tenants have of their landlord, and in the administration of the survey. The final response rate of 71% is outstanding for a postal survey, and is a high response for the STATUS questionnaire.

### **General findings**

The results of the survey show that on all counts Babergh DC tenants are highly satisfied with their homes and the services provided by their landlord. An impressive 87.4% of tenants are satisfied with their landlord. 84.8% of tenants think that they receive good value for money.

92% of tenants are satisfied with their accommodation and 86.9% with the condition of the property. 86.5% of tenants are satisfied with the way in which Babergh DC deals with repairs and maintenance. Staff at Babergh DC are also highly praised, 91% of tenants found the staff helpful the last time they contacted the Council. In a comparison with other councils, Babergh DC's tenants consistently rate their landlord equal or above the best of the other local authorities.

Babergh DC has a high percentage of older tenants. Experience from STATUS and other surveys show that older tenants are usually more satisfied than other tenants. However this factor should not detract from the excellent results of this survey.

### **Specific recommendations for action**

The survey did not find any areas where tenants believed performance was poor. However, in the spirit of continuous improvement, there were a few aspects of service where standards were not as high as others, and where remedial measures could be taken.

Some, such as local problems, may not be within the powers of Babergh DC to resolve and perhaps involve working with partner agencies. Though such information should be taken on board when considering, for example, allocations and development policy. Listed below are services or areas of work, which may warrant a review:

- Tenants satisfaction with the opportunities to be involved in the management of their home (BVPI) had lower levels of satisfaction compared to other services and facilities (57% “fairly” or “very” satisfied). More promotional work, changes to participation structures, and further consultation of a more qualitative nature (such as focus groups), to find out what the barriers to involvement are.
- Awareness of Tenant Compacts is low. This is obviously dependant on the work already carried out by Babergh DC, more work is needed to promote and publicise the Compacts.
- Tenants reported some local problems, which will affect their enjoyment of their home and the environment. This may involve additional analysis to identify the specific areas.

## **6. APPENDICES**

6.1 The Questionnaire

6.2 The Covering Letter

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