



Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods



Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2014

Version 2

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1. Introduction

This report details the results of the latest Tenant Satisfaction Survey of Unity tenants, carried out in spring/summer 2014. The results have been compared to previous years' performance and recommendations are made for addressing the issues arising from it.

As a Registered Social Landlord, Unity aims to carry out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey every 3-4 years. This year, Unity used the standardised STATUS format as a template for our Tenant Satisfaction Survey, although to make the survey shorter and less intimidating some of the questions were omitted. Unity also included some questions which would not typically appear on the STATUS survey in order to gather information about the full range of services Unity offers tenants, for instance Unity's dedicated Employment Service and Unity's Financial Inclusion Service.

Unity's last full STATUS Survey was carried out in spring 2010. This was followed up by a mini-STATUS in 2012 using key performance indicator questions and collecting qualitative data.

The 2014 Tenant Satisfaction Survey was statistically valid with 404 returns (a 40% response rate) and shows improvement in many areas of tenant satisfaction of which staff can be proud. Unity needs to build on these positive results to become a high-performing organisation.

1.1 Methodology and response rate

Unity attempted to survey all tenants in rented accommodation; a total of 1027 households. As an incentive, three prize draws were offered for £50, £30 and £20. All tenants were sent a questionnaire in May 2014, this was followed up two weeks later by another questionnaire in June.

To reach the level of statistical accuracy required, Unity set a target of 35% responses, or 359 returns. The mailshots did not produce a sufficient number of returns, so staff carried out targeted exercises to increase returns. These included telephone calls and door-knocking.

It took longer than anticipated to reach the target number of returns, due to the decelerating rate of returns. The survey was closed in September 2014. At this time 404 questionnaires had been received; a response rate of 40%.

1.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on the standard general needs STATUS template, though as we already hold a great deal of the information asked for in this survey, we were able to omit some of the questions.

We added questions about specific services in order to ascertain the areas for improvement and to identify tenants who feel disappointed by Unity with a view to addressing their concerns.

Additional questions included:

- Does your neighbourhood have any problems that you'd like us to do something about?
- If you have had difficulties paying your rent over the past year, how satisfied are you with how you were dealt with and the help you were given?
- Unity has a free Employment Outreach Service to help you and your family. If you have used this service, how satisfied were you with it?
- As a Unity tenant you have the right to get involved in how Unity is managed and to scrutinise the service that we give to our customers. Do you want more information on your options for having more of a say?

A full copy of the survey can be found attached.

1.3 Accuracy of data

It is important to note that although the sample of 368 tenants is sufficient to give an accurate reflection of satisfaction across the tenant-base, care must be taken when interpreting results for separate groups within the sample.

For instance where 82.2% of our 404 respondents are satisfied with Unity's overall services, it is possible to be 95% confident that the figure for all tenants would be within $\pm 2.9\%$ of this figure. Thus, we can say that with a 95% level of confidence that 79.3% - 85.1% of Unity tenants are satisfied with our overall services.

However, the confidence interval for our White British tenants would be different, given the smaller sample size of 128. Although 87.4% of them are satisfied, it is only possible to say with 95% confidence that the figure for all White British tenants would be within ± 5.4 of this figure; and in the range 82% - 92.8%.

Our 8 Asian Bangladeshi respondents reported an 87.5% overall satisfaction level. However at 95% confidence this only has an accuracy of ± 22.8 (64.7% - 100%) which is too wide a range to be able to draw firm conclusions.

2.0 Overview of key findings

2.1 Satisfaction with overall services by Unity has decreased.

This survey shows that tenants' satisfaction has fallen slightly to 82.2%. While every effort has been made to enhance the service Unity provides to tenants affected by the Government's Welfare Reforms, for some it will inevitably have affected their relationship with Unity. . Furthermore, a news report indicated that customer satisfaction has slipped at 40% of the largest 50 UK housing associations, for some by a much bigger margin, so it is perhaps not surprising that tenant satisfaction has suffered a small decline.

Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with the services provided by Unity?							
	Responses	%	STATUS 2006 %	Mini-STATUS 2009 %	STATUS 2010 %	Mini-STATUS 2012 %	%
Very satisfied	194	48	62.1	66.6	79.4	88	82.2
Fairly satisfied	138	34.2					
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	30	7.4	13.9	15.4	8.7	4.9	7.4
Fairly dissatisfied	22	5.4	24	18	11.9	7.1	10.4
Very dissatisfied	20	5					

2.2 Satisfaction with neighbourhoods has remained similar

The survey shows that satisfaction with neighbourhoods has decreased slightly since 2012. This question was asked for the first time in 2012. For this reason, it is not possible to determine whether the 2014 survey marks the start of a trend in either direction.

How satisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?				
	Responses	%	Mini-STATUS 2012 %	%
Very satisfied	182	45.3	85.2	82.3
Fairly satisfied	149	37.1		
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	34	8.5	8.3	8.5
Fairly dissatisfied	20	5.0	5.5	9.2
Very dissatisfied	17	4.2		

2.3 Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance has remained similar

Although satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service has fallen slightly, so too has dissatisfaction, which suggests that overall satisfaction with the service has remained similar.

Generally, how satisfied are you with the way Unity deals with repairs and maintenance?							
	Responses	%	STATUS 2006 %	Mini- STATUS 2009 %	STATUS 2010 %	Mini- STATUS 2012 %	%
Very satisfied	198	48.9	53	60.2	74.3	86.3	85.4
Fairly satisfied	148	36.5					
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22	5.4	10.2	15	9	3.5	5.4
Fairly dissatisfied	24	5.9	36.8	24.8	16.7	10.2	9.1
Very dissatisfied	13	2.2					

2.4 Satisfaction with how Unity takes tenants views into account has increased

Satisfaction with how views are taken into account by Unity has increased considerably since 2010, although the question was not asked in 2012 so it is not possible to say how much this has increased since then.

How satisfied are you that Unity listens to your views and acts upon them?					
	Responses	%	Mini- STATUS 2009 %	STATUS 2010 %	%
Very satisfied	165	40.7	56.3	63.9	75.2
Fairly satisfied	140	34.5			
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	59	14.6	26.3	25.5	14.6
Fairly dissatisfied	21	5.2	17.4	10.6	10.1
Very dissatisfied	20	4.9			

NB: For the remaining questions the respondents who answered 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' have been omitted from the results, on the advice of the Customer Service Excellence Assessor, for the following reasons:

- Tenants were not given the opportunity to elaborate on their response nor a comment box for them to write their explanation, and as such it is difficult to use these responses to inform and improve services
- Some of the respondents who had not accessed the services including Unity's Employment Services and Unity's Financial Inclusion Services responded 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' when they should have responded 'N/A' or left the question unanswered.

2.5 The vast majority of tenants were satisfied with the advice given, if they had had difficulties paying their rent.

This is the first time this question has been asked, so we are unable to say for definite that the appointment of the Financial Inclusion Officer and the Income Support Officers has had an effect on satisfaction with the advice given, though the 87.2% satisfaction return suggests that it has.

If you have had difficulties paying your rent over the past year, how satisfied are you with how you were dealt with and the help you were given?

	Respondents	%	%
Very satisfied	114	60.9	87.2
Fairly satisfied	49	26.2	
Fairly dissatisfied	8	4.3	12.8
Very dissatisfied	16	8.6	

2.6 The vast majority of tenants were satisfied with Unity’s Employment Service.

While we are not able to say whether 91.8% represents an improvement as this is the first time the question was asked; we can say with confidence that this a result which Unity can be proud of.

Unity has a free Employment Outreach Service to help you and your family, how satisfied were you with it?

	Respondents	%	%
Very satisfied	48	65.8	91.8
Fairly satisfied	19	26.0	
Fairly dissatisfied	2	2.7	8.2
Very dissatisfied	4	5.5	
Total	73		

2.7 Satisfaction with neighbourhoods is generally high, but varies considerably.

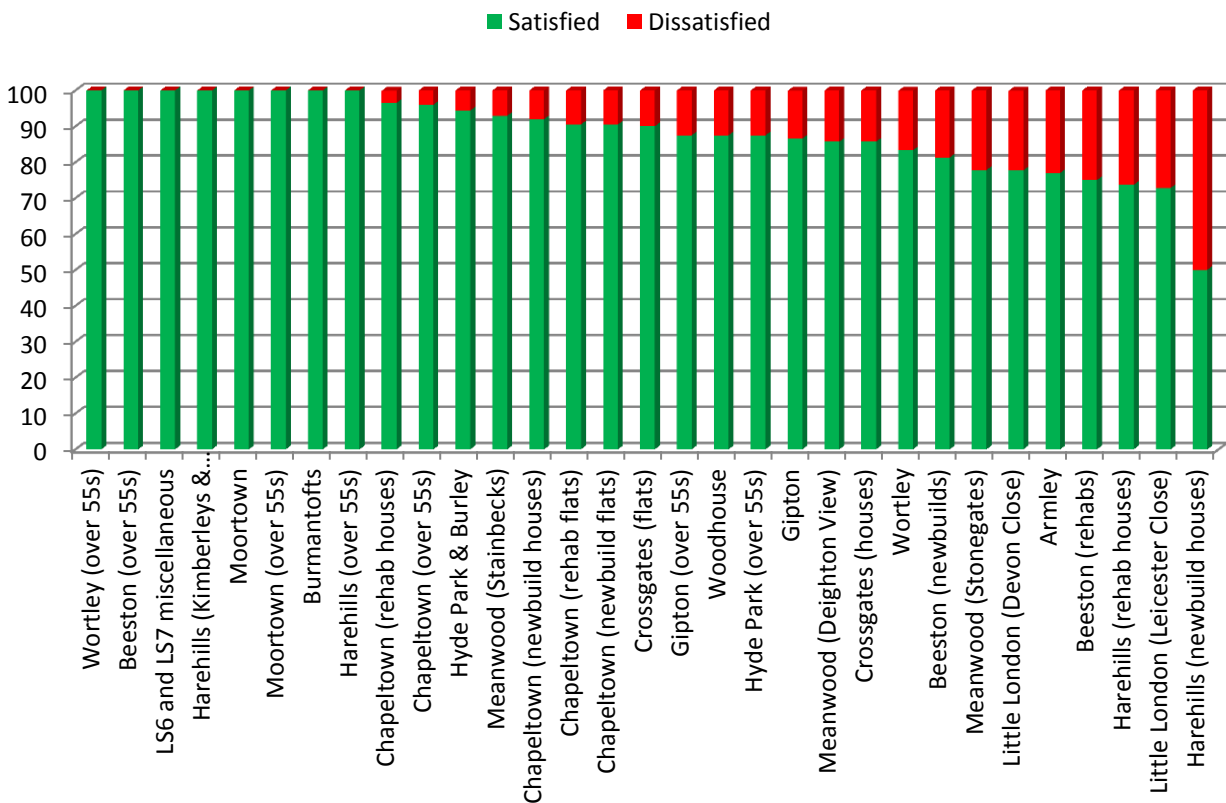


Figure 1: Satisfaction with estates and neighbourhoods

Figure 1 shows that, when combining the 'fairly satisfied' and 'very satisfied' responses from each area, there are several areas that reported 100% satisfaction with their neighbourhood. However it is worth considering that the sample size in some of these areas was relatively low. In this same way, Harehills (newbuild houses) reported only 50% satisfaction, but due to the low turnout in this area it may not accurately represent the views of all tenants living on this area, in this type of property.

It is not possible to draw firm conclusions about which areas are the most satisfied, rather we can only be certain about which estates or property types residents are satisfied with, and which estates and/or property types require more attention.

In Harehills for instance, residents living in Harehills (over 55s) properties; and properties on the Kimberleys and Kitcheners reported 100% satisfaction. Conversely, the miscellaneous rehab and newbuild houses in Harehills reported much lower levels of satisfaction.

In LS6 and LS7, this tendency was reversed. LS6 and LS7 miscellaneous properties which span Hyde Park, Woodhouse and Little London reported 100% satisfaction, whereas the Unity's estates in Little London; Leicester Close and Devon Close reported levels of satisfaction as low as 72%

Variation in satisfaction also occurred in the case of Wortley (over 55s) and other properties in Wortley which yielded a difference of 17% satisfaction. In Moortown however, all respondents reported that they were 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhood regardless of the type of property or the estate.

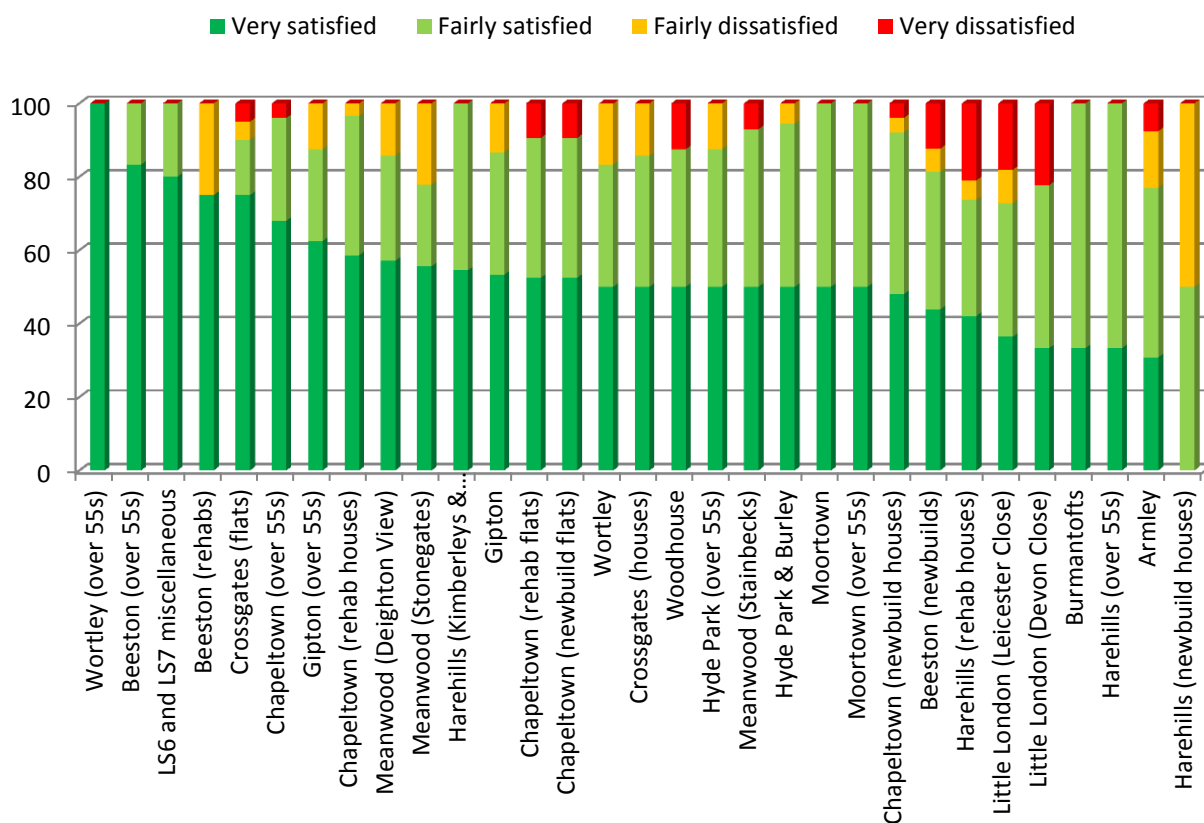


Figure 2: Satisfaction with estates and neighbourhoods taking into account degrees of satisfaction

Figure 2 gives a slightly different impression of satisfaction with estates and neighbourhoods, in that in terms of residents who responding 'very satisfied' several estates move up the scale. Gipton (over 55s) and Crossgates (flats) boast much higher levels of 'very satisfied' tenants than the Moortown properties even though the total satisfaction of the Moortown properties is higher.

Perhaps the most notable shift in satisfaction was the Beeston (rehab), reporting the fourth highest % of tenants expressing that they are 'very satisfied' with their neighbourhood, compared with the fourth lowest overall satisfaction.

A number of schemes for residents over the age of 55 expressed high levels of satisfaction. This could be because these schemes are less prone to neighbourhood nuisances such as noisy neighbours or unruly children.

3. Detailed results

3.1 Length of tenancy

It is important to consider that the demographic of the respondents may have had a bearing on their likelihood to complete the survey and their answers.

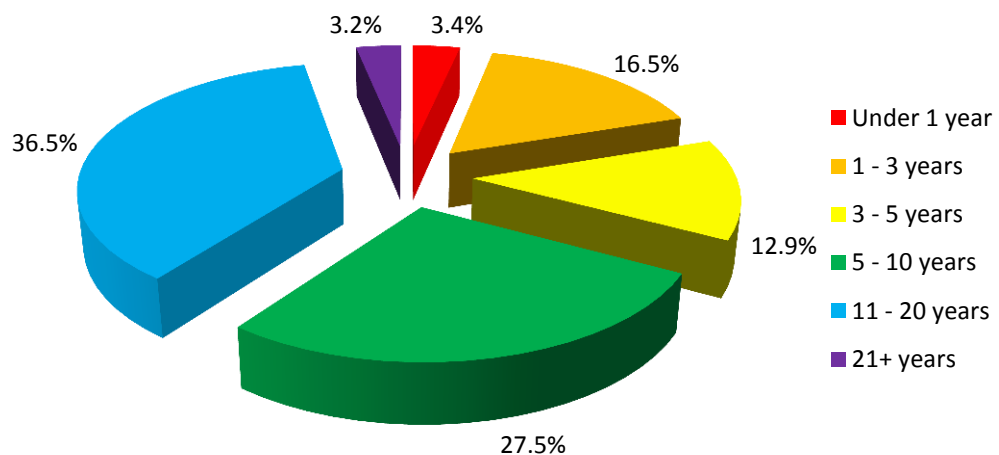


Figure 3: Length of tenancy for all Unity tenants

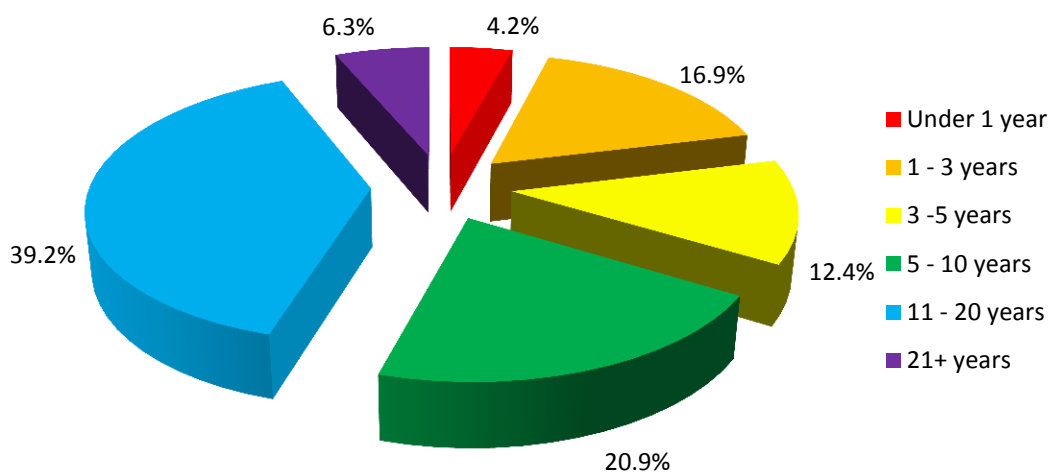


Figure 4: Length of tenancy for respondents

Figure 3 shows that 40.4% of tenants have been Unity tenants for between 3 and 10 years. Only 3.2% tenants have been Unity tenants for over 21 years and only 3.4% have been tenants for less than a year.

However Figure 4 shows that only 33.3% of respondents have been Unity tenants for between 3 and 10 years. It also shows that tenants who have been Unity tenants for more than 21 years were nearly twice as likely to respond.

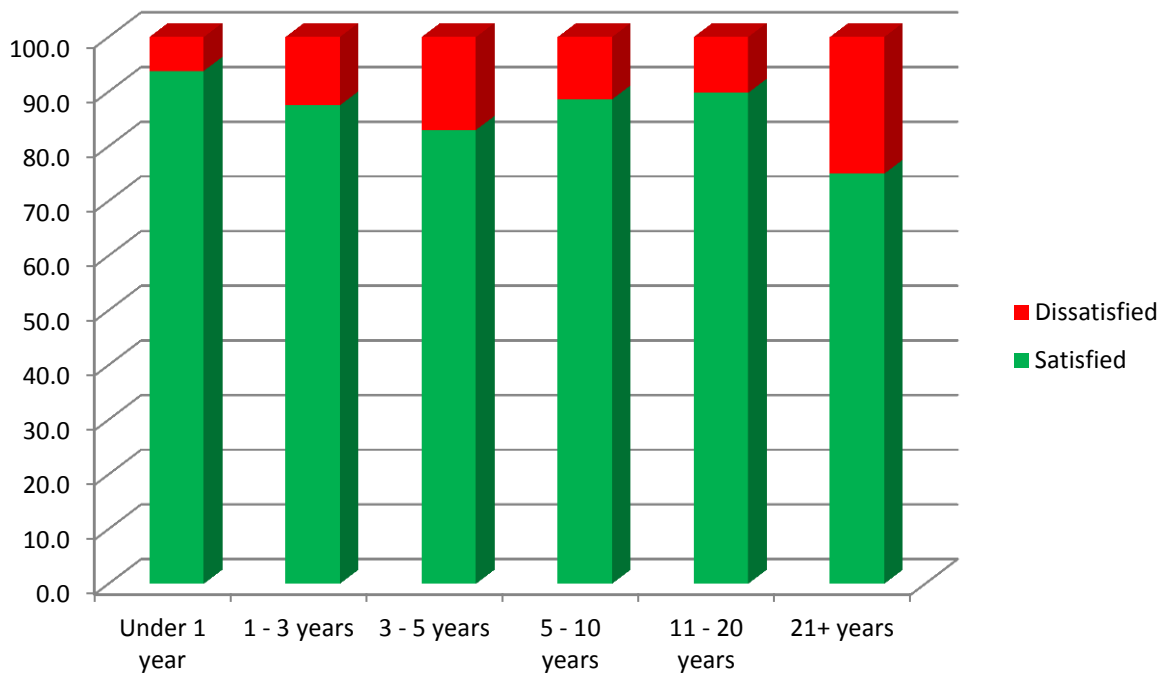


Figure 5: A graph to show satisfaction of tenants in terms of length of tenancy

Figure 5 illustrates that length of tenancy has little to do with tenant satisfaction, although tenants who have been with Unity for less than a year are generally the most satisfied. Interestingly, tenants who have been with Unity for more than 21 year years exhibited the lowest of levels of satisfaction, although it is worth considering that fewer tenants fall in to either of these categories and as such an individual’s response will have had more bearing on the overall figure.

Reasons as to why tenants who have been with Unity for more than 21 years are expressing the lowest levels of dissatisfaction are unclear; although anecdotal evidence suggests that long-serving residents become frustrated when waiting for new kitchens and bathrooms etc.

Due to the larger sample size of the other groups (1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years and 11-20 years) we can be more confident that the results are accurate.

3.2 Ethnicity

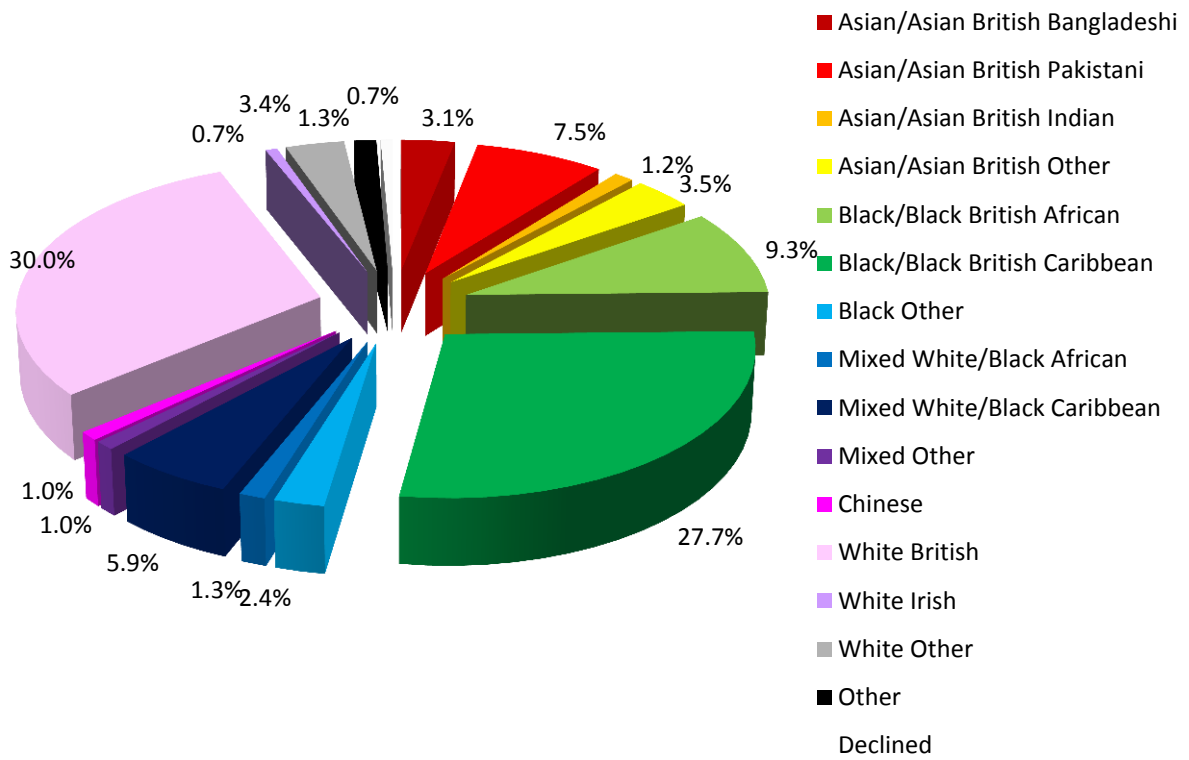


Figure 6: The ethnicity for all Unity tenants

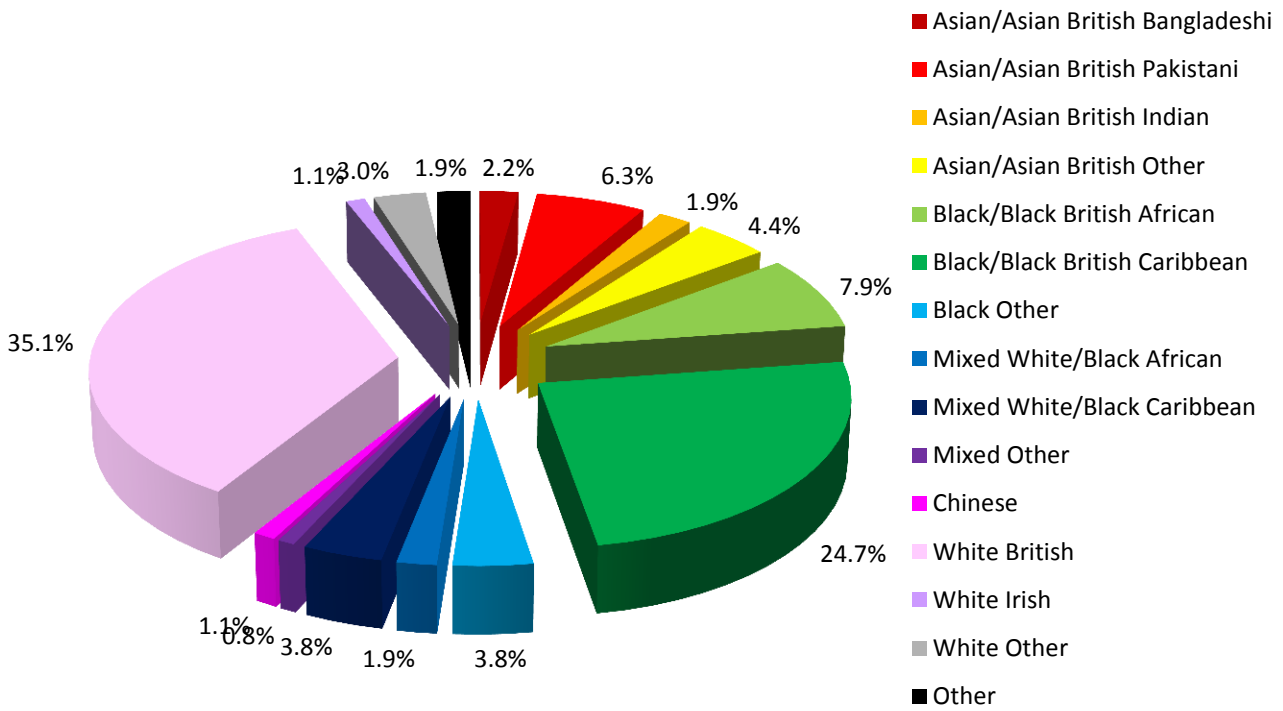


Figure 7: The ethnicity for all respondents

Figures 6 and 7 illustrate that ethnicity has little bearing on the tenants' likelihood to respond. Although White British tenants were slightly more likely to respond than tenants of other ethnicities, each has been adequately represented in the Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

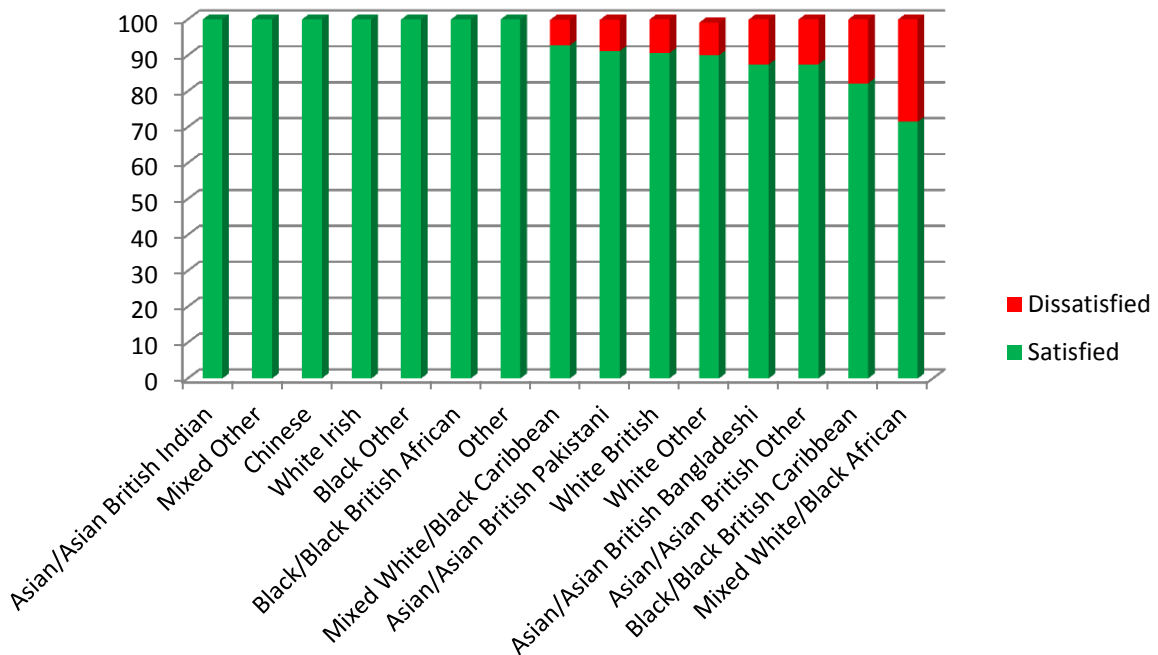


Figure 8: A graph to show tenant satisfaction vs. ethnicity

Figure 7 illustrates that a number of ethnic groups reported 100% satisfaction whereas Mixed White/Black African and tenants were much less satisfied, although in this case the low level of satisfaction could be attributed to the low number of respondents from this category.

It is difficult to determine any sort of trend in this particular demographic, leading to the conclusion that ethnicity has little or no bearing on tenant satisfaction. As an organisation that celebrates equality and diversity and treating all sectors of the community with respect and integrity, this is reassuring to hear.

3.3 Gender

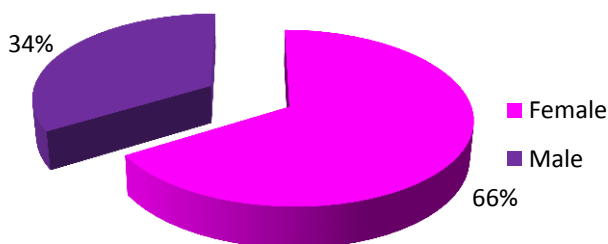


Figure 9: Gender of all Unity tenants

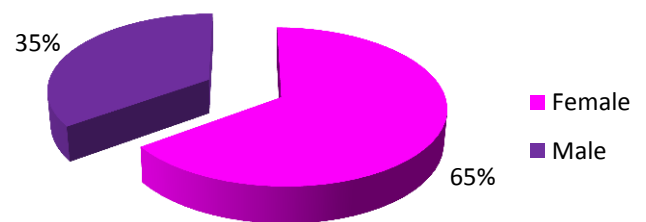


Figure 10: Gender of respondents

Figures 9 and 10 illustrate that gender has little or no bearing on the tenant's likelihood to respond to the likelihood to respond to the survey. The fact that more female tenants responded to the survey is an accurate reflection of Unity's tenant demographic.

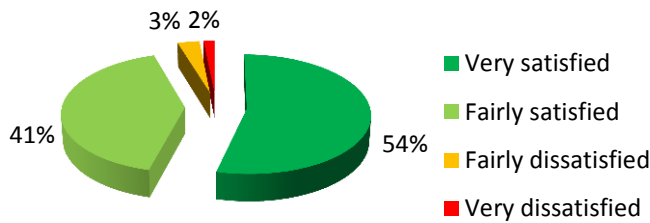


Figure 11: Satisfaction of male respondents

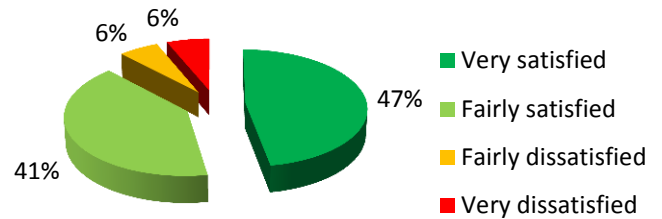


Figure 12: Satisfaction of female respondents

Figures 11 and 12, on the other hand, reveal some striking differences in the satisfaction levels of female and male tenants. While the proportion of male and female tenants stating that they are 'fairly satisfied' with the overall service provided, female tenants were twice as likely to be 'fairly' or 'very' dissatisfied.

Possible reasons for this could be that a number of Unity's female residents fall into the category of single-parent family. A far smaller percentage of our male tenants fall into this category. The burden of being a single parent is likely to aggravate any frustrations the resident has with Unity, for instance repairs not being carried out on time, or issues with anti-social behaviour.

3.4 Age

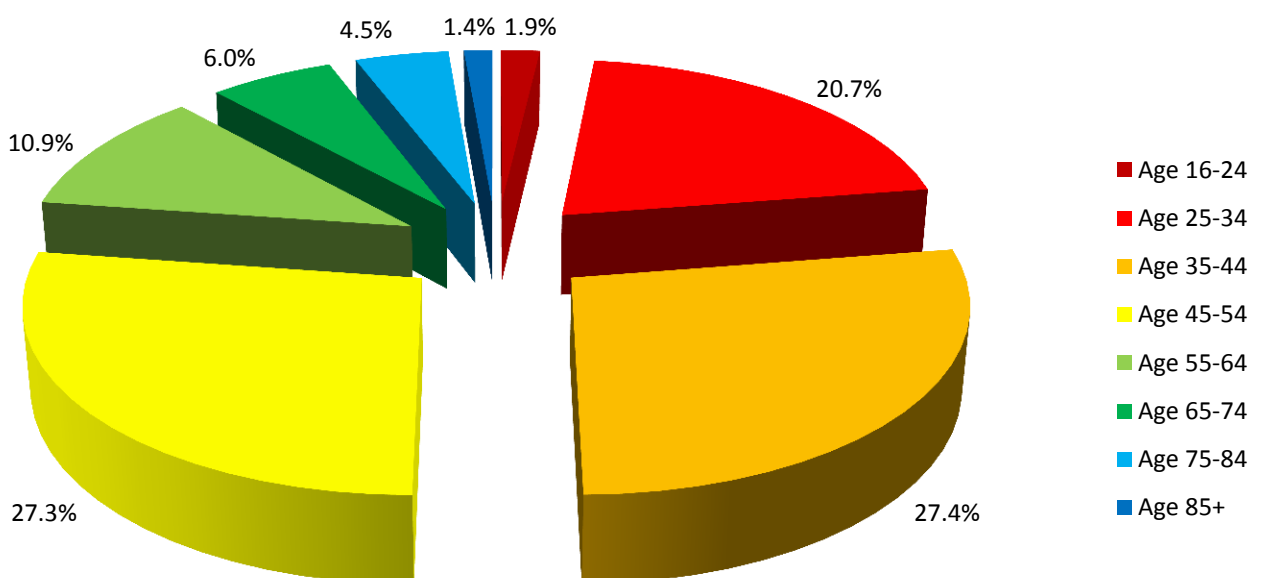


Figure 13: Age of Unity tenants

Unity has a young tenant profile (compared to similar organisations) with 50% of tenants under the age of 44. The largest proportion of tenants are between the ages of 35 and 44.

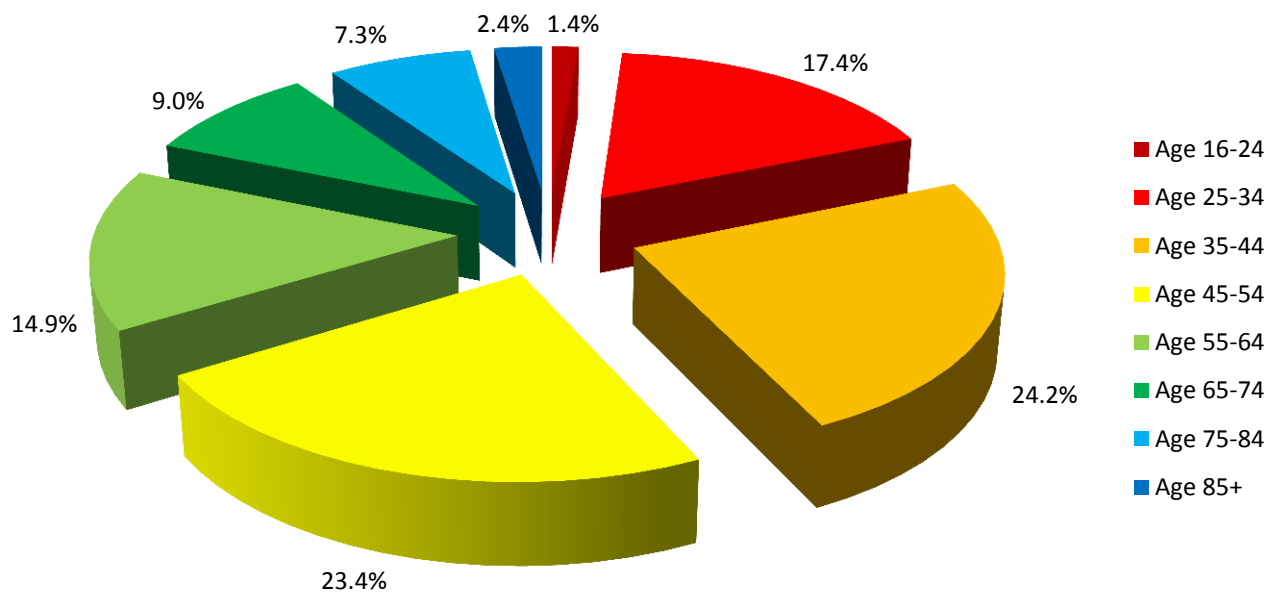


Figure 14: Age of respondents

Unlike length of tenancy, ethnicity or sex, age appears to have some influence on a tenant's likelihood to respond to the survey. It is interesting that tenants while 54.7% are between the ages of 35 and 54, only 47.6% of respondents were in this age bracket.

Tenants between the ages of 16 and 34 account for 22.6% of Unity's tenant profile, yet just 18.8% of respondents fell into this category. Tenants above the age of 55 represent 22.8% of Unity's tenant profile over a third of respondents were over the age of 55. In short, tenants above the age of 55 were far more likely to respond than tenants of any other age category.

This could be because tenants of this age category are less likely to be working and/or have childcare responsibilities and may have more time to complete surveys such as this one.

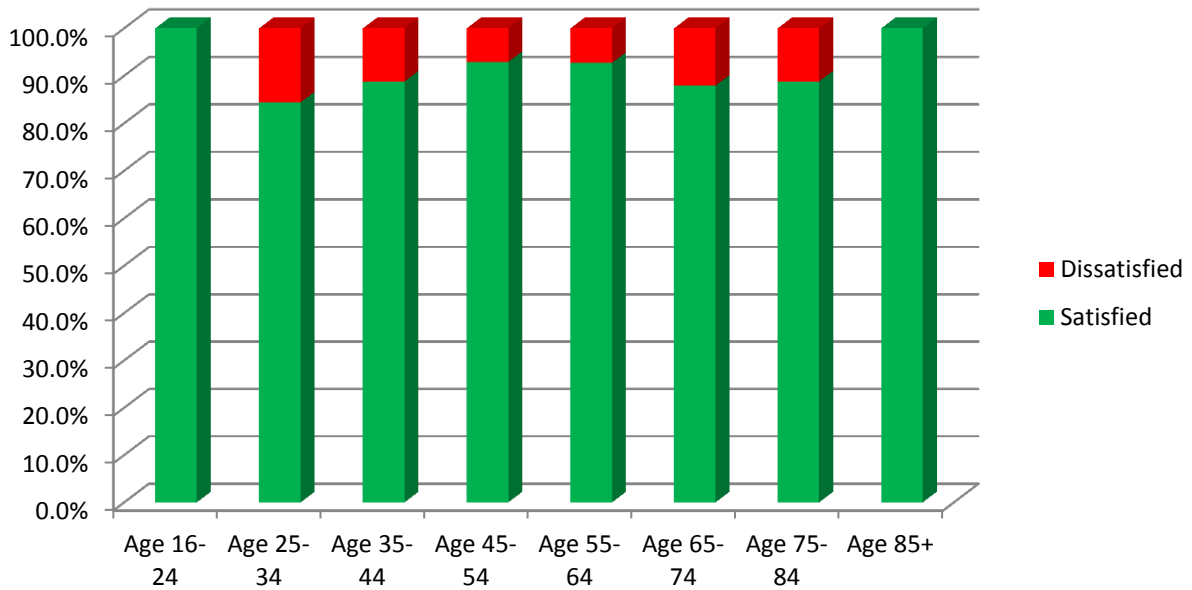


Figure 15: Tenant satisfaction vs age

At a glance, it appears that age has little bearing on tenant satisfaction. While it is worth noting that tenants between the ages of 16 and 24 and tenants over the age of 85% reported 100% satisfaction – due to the smaller sample size this result may not reflect of the overall opinion of all tenants in this category. The other age groups expressed similar levels of satisfaction.

3.5 Ethnicity vs. views taken into consideration

While it has been established that ethnicity has little bearing on satisfaction with Unity as a landlord, it is worth ensuring that tenants from each ethnic group believe they are being treated favourably by Unity by comparing their responses when asked the question: ‘How satisfied are you that Unity listens to your views and acts upon them?’

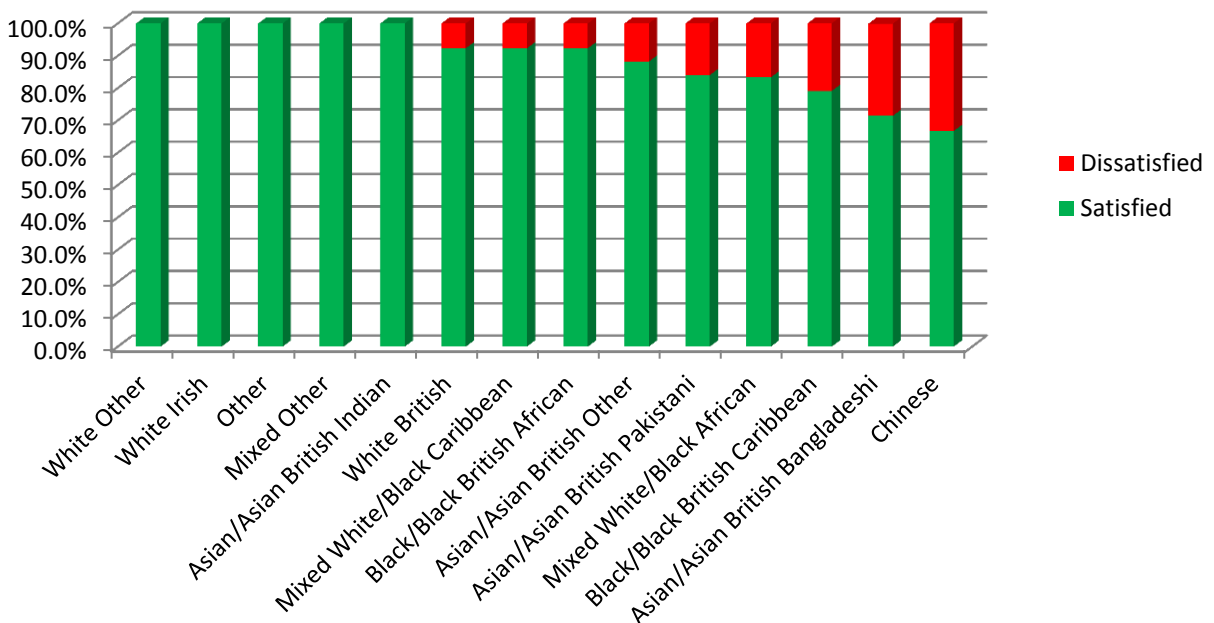


Figure 16: Satisfaction with views taken into consideration vs. ethnicity

Figure 16 appears to show that ethnicity does not play a significant role in tenants' opinion of whether their views are taken into consideration or not. Interestingly, some of the ethnic groups expressing high levels of satisfaction with Unity's overall services, such as Mixed White/Black African and Chinese are dissatisfied that their views are listened and acted upon.

Also interesting is that White Other, White Irish and White British tenants expressing high levels of satisfaction that their views are taken into consideration, whereas Asian/Asian British Bangladeshi and Asian/Asian British Pakistani (who account for over 10% of Unity's tenant profile) are much less satisfied that their views are being listened to and acted upon.

Perhaps Asian/Asian British tenants are not aware of the opportunities that they have to influence service delivery at Unity Housing, either through our Tenant Panels or through focus groups and surveys.

The fact that Black/Black British Caribbean tenants are expressing low levels of satisfaction with overall services provided by Unity *and* satisfaction that their views are being taken into consideration might also be a cause for concern.

3.6 Age vs. views taken into consideration

The results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey show that, while the age of the tenants may have had some influence over their likelihood to respond to the survey, it had little or no relationship to the overall satisfaction of the tenants. It is worth determining whether this is also true of age of the tenant and satisfaction that their views have been taken into consideration.

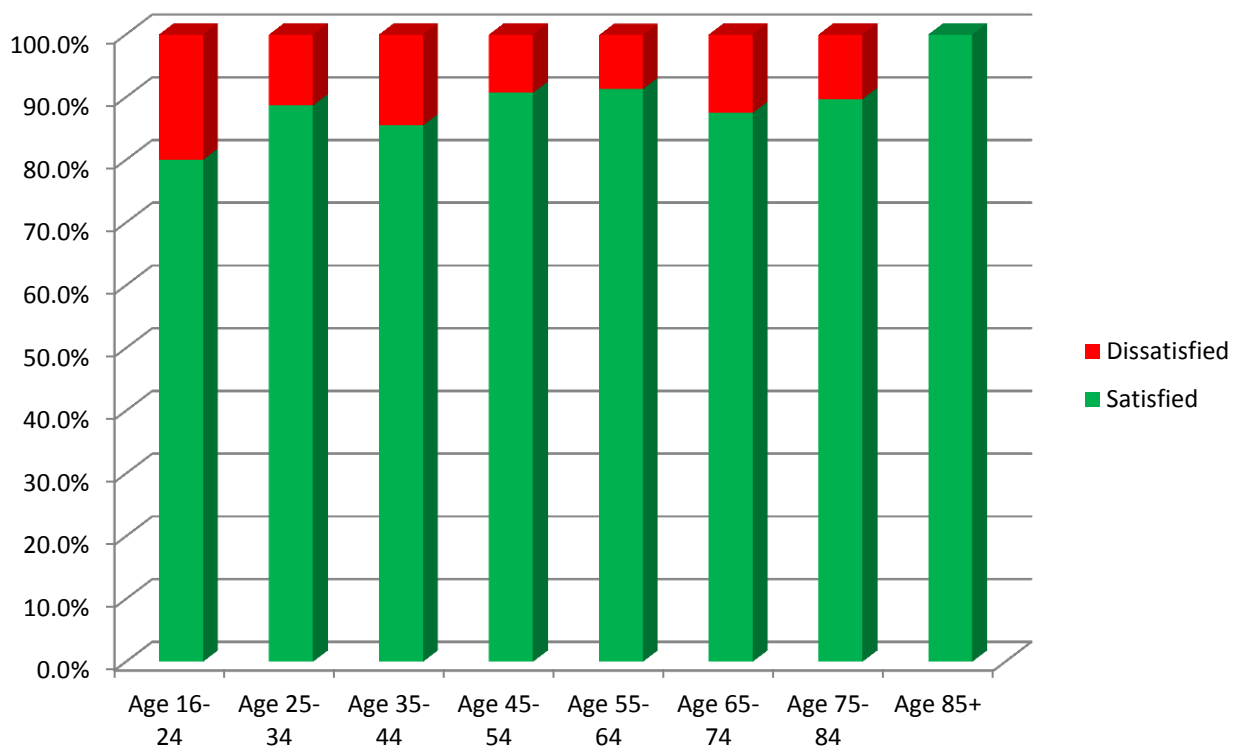


Figure 17: Satisfaction that vies have been taken into consideration vs. age

Figure 17 shows that age does not seem to have any strong relationship with tenant's belief that their views are taken into consideration. With the exception of the over 85s, the age groups most satisfied that their views are listened to and taken into account are 45-54 and 55-64.

Most of our current Tenant Panel members fall between the ages of 45 and 64, which might go some way to explaining why these age groups feel their views are adequately represented. Conversely, the age group expressing the highest level of satisfaction with Unity's overall service, 16-24, is the least satisfied that their views are being taken into consideration. It could be that this age group are not aware and are not taking advantage of opportunities to voice their opinions through our Tenant Panels and focus groups.

3.7 Possible reasons for dissatisfaction

It may be possible to deduce some of the reasons for dissatisfaction with landlord services by comparing how the respondents answered the other questions.

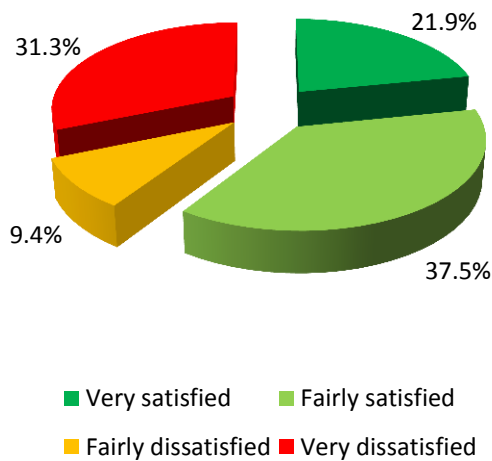


Figure 18: Response to the question 'How satisfied are you with your neighbourhood?'

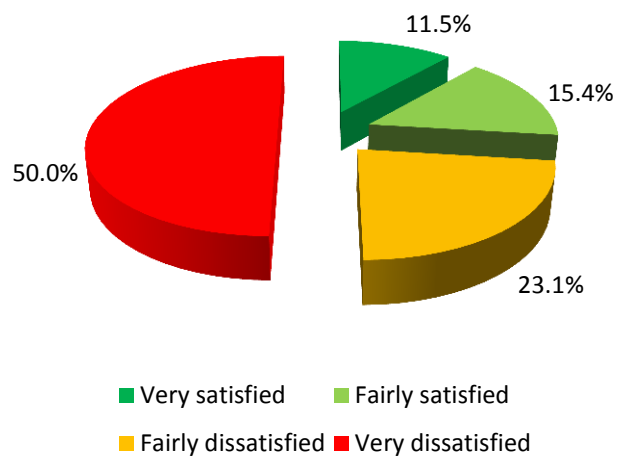


Figure 19: Response to the question 'How satisfied are you your views are taken into account?'

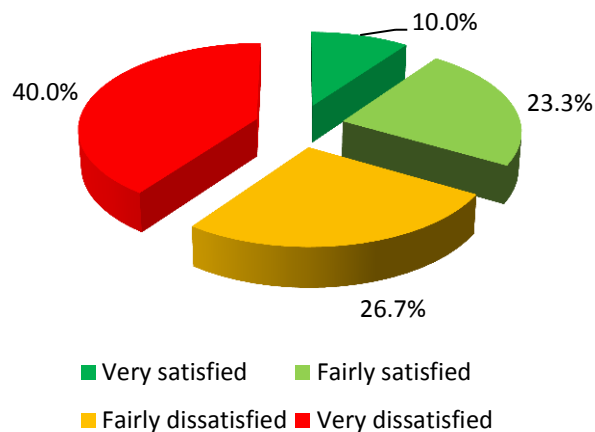


Figure 19: Response to the question 'How satisfied are you with repairs and maintenance?'

Figures 17-20 show quite clearly that satisfaction with neighbourhoods, that views are taken into consideration, and repairs and maintenance all contribute to the tenants' overall impression of Unity, however the influence they have varies.

Figure 18 illustrates that while nearly one third of tenants who were dissatisfied with Unity were also 'very dissatisfied' their neighbourhoods, the majority of dissatisfied tenants (59.4%) were actually satisfied with their neighbourhoods as a place to live.

Of course, while Unity does play a role in creating harmonious and prosperous neighbourhoods, some neighbourhood issues are on such a broad scale that Unity is limited as to what it is able to do about them. This is particularly true of our miscellaneous, rehab properties where we intervention in neighbourhood disputes is more complicated.

On the other hand, Figure 19 shows that nearly three quarters of tenants dissatisfied with Unity's overall services were also dissatisfied with that their views had been listened to and acted upon. Many of these particular respondents had outstanding repairs or anti-social behaviour issues at the time of their response and this has evidently influenced their decision to respond in this way.

Similarly, two thirds of dissatisfied tenants were also dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service. Only 10% of dissatisfied tenants expressed that they were 'very satisfied' with the repairs and maintenance service. The anecdotal evidence qualified by the respondents' written comments certainly seems to back this up.

3.8 Repairs satisfaction vs. working arrangement

It may also be useful to consider whether tenants' working arrangement had any impression on their satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service. One might assume that a working tenant (particularly those who work office hours) might have more difficulty making appointments with contractors and this might be reflected in their satisfaction of the repairs and maintenance service.

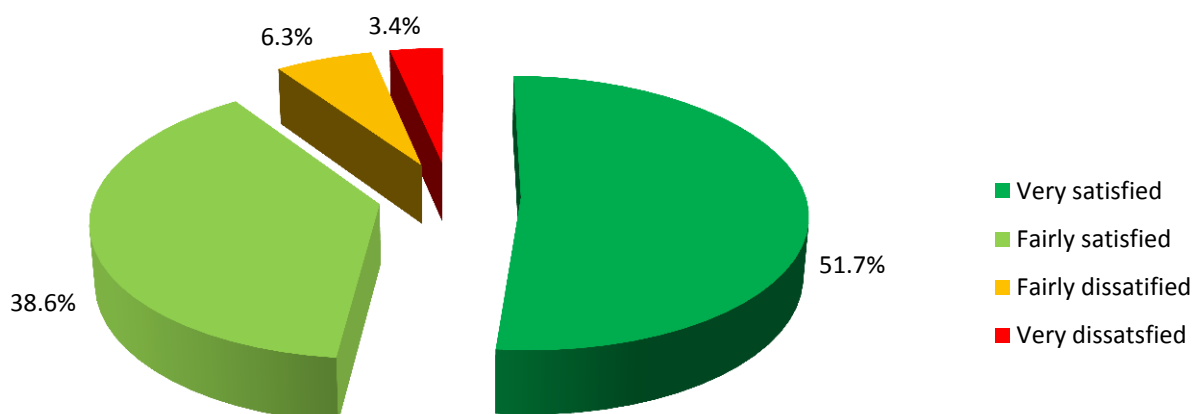


Figure 20: Overall satisfaction with repairs and maintenance service

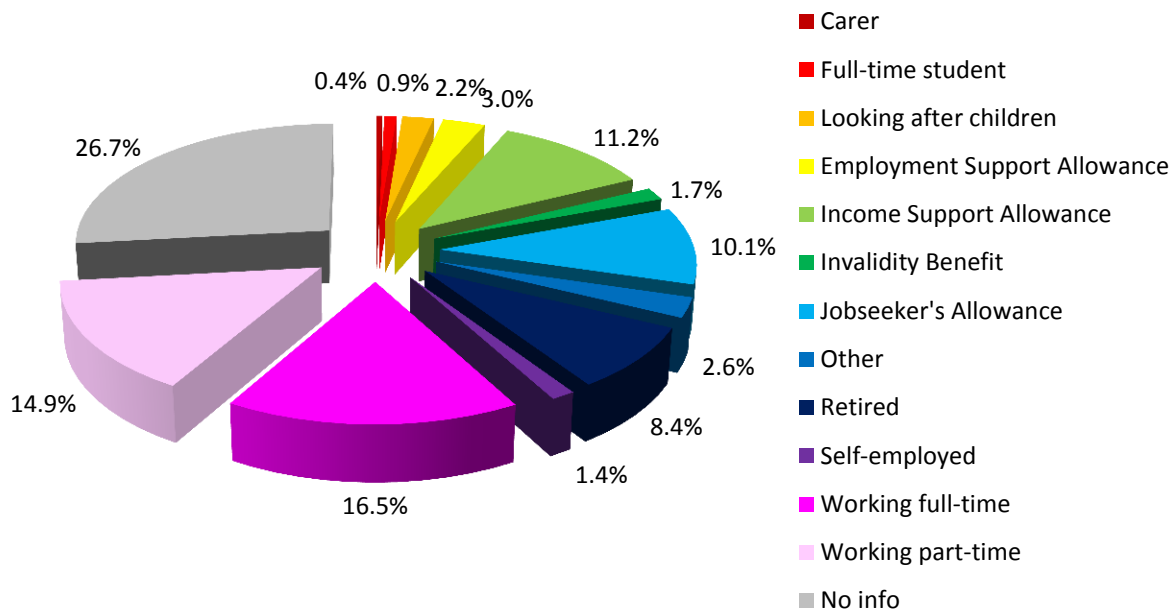


Figure 21: Breakdown of employment status of all Unity tenants

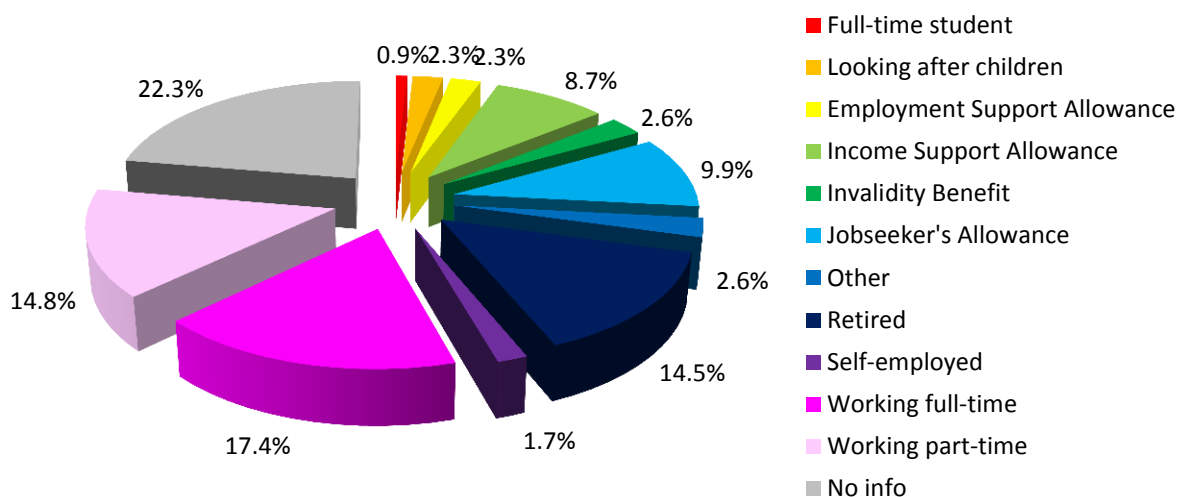


Figure 22: Breakdown of employment status of Unity tenants satisfied with repairs and maintenance service

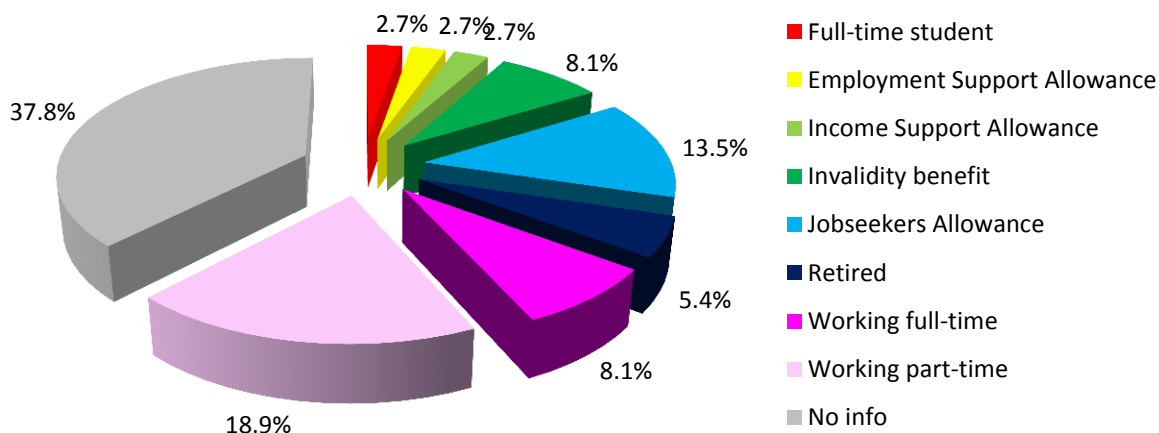


Figure 23: Breakdown of employment status of Unity tenants dissatisfied with repairs and maintenance service

Figure 22 shows that the employment status tenants who are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service generally reflects the employment status of Unity's tenant profile. This is true in all areas except retired tenants, who are reporting higher levels of satisfaction (72.6%) with the repairs and maintenance service than average.

Figure 23 on the other hand, shows some distinction between the employment status of tenants who are dissatisfied in the repairs and maintenance service and the employment status of the wider tenant base.

Interestingly, tenants working full-time are less likely to be dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service, though one might expect the reverse to be true. Only 8.1% of tenants working full-time are dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service, which is less than half the 16.5% average you might expect. This could perhaps be because working tenants appreciate the 'first-call' repairs service, which means that the contractor prioritises their repair so that they are able to get to work on time. Retired tenants too, are less likely to be dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.

The most striking difference is that 8.1% of tenants dissatisfied with the repairs service are claiming Invalidity Benefit, whereas tenants claiming Invalidity Benefit represent just 1.7% of the wider tenant base. This means that tenants claiming Invalidity Benefit are four times as likely to be dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service than other tenants. Perhaps Unity should assess whether the repairs service, and the service of our contractors goes far enough to meet the needs of people who are disabled and other vulnerable people.

3.9 Neighbourhood problems by area

The following table is a count of how many neighbourhood problems were reported in each area by means of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey:

	Pets (noise, fouling, etc)	Parking / driving	Litter	Graffiti	Drug use / dealing	Pests	ASB	Crime	Total
Armley	1								1
Beeston	1	2	2	1			2		8
Burley			1				1		2
Burmantofts		1	2		1				4
Chapelton		3	9				3		15
Crossgates	3	2	1		1		1	1	9
Gipton		1	1				1		3
Harehills	1	1	6		2	2	5		17
Little London	1	2	2		2		2	1	10
Meanwood	2		2		2		5		11
Moortown	1								1
Woodhouse			2		2		5		9
Wortley		2							2
	10	14	26	1	10	2	25	2	

In order to assess whether the number of neighbourhood problems reported in each area is

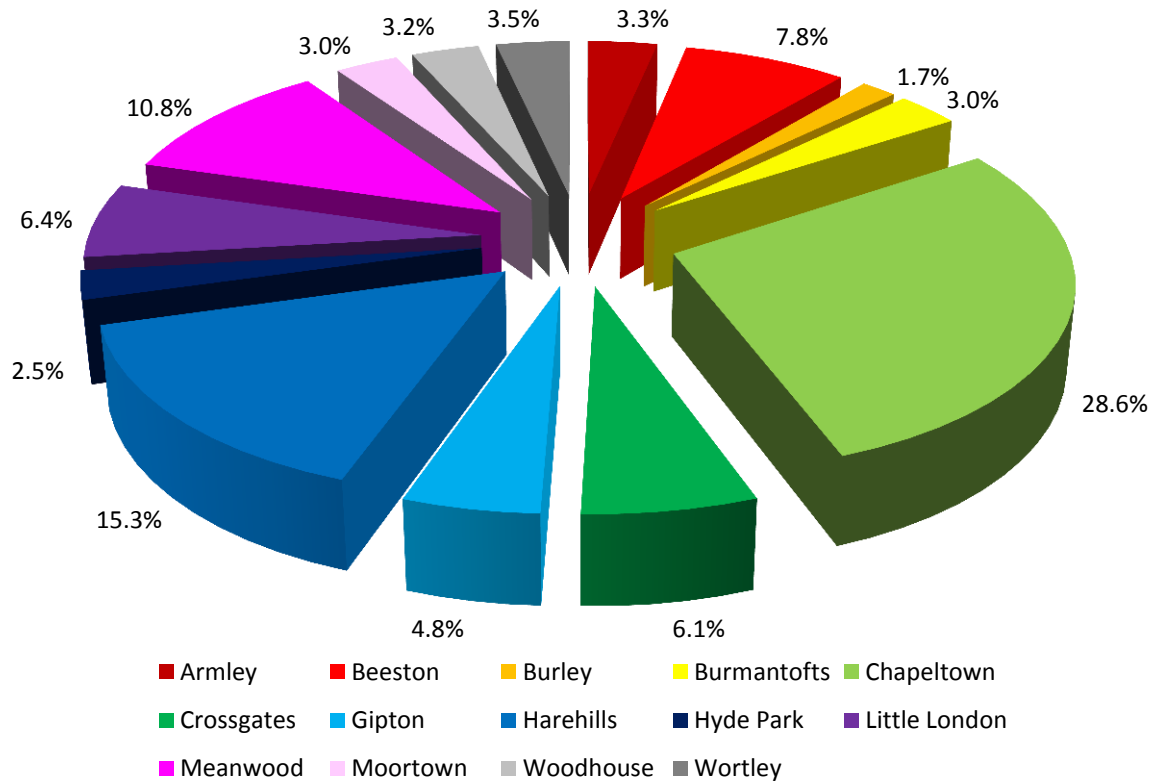


Figure 24: Breakdown of Unity properties by area

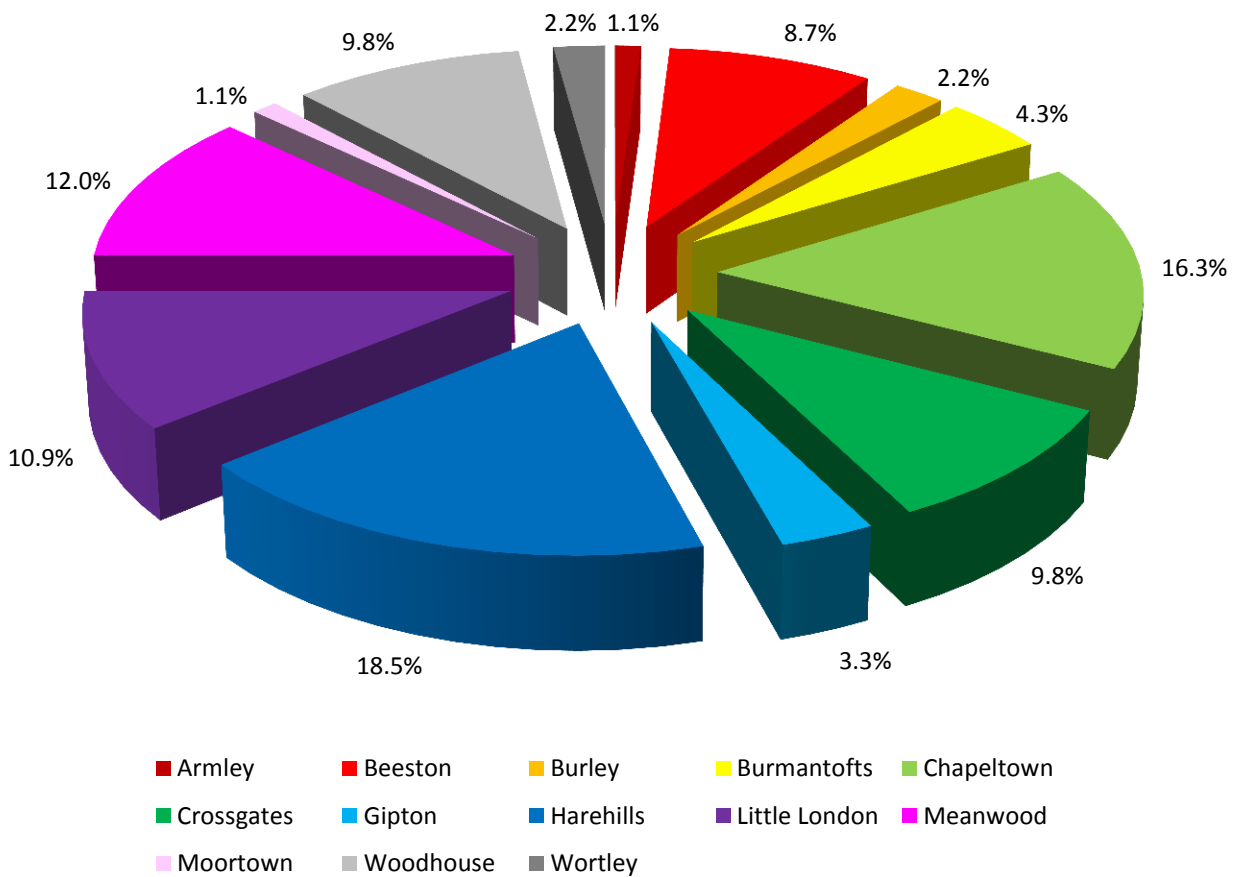


Figure 25: Breakdown of neighbourhood problems by area

At a glance Figures 24 and 25 appear quite similar. However there are a few areas of Leeds reporting a disproportionate number of neighbourhood complaints.

19 neighbourhood complaints were reported by means of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey by tenants living in the neighbouring areas of Little London and Woodhouse. These complaints account for 20.7% of all neighbourhood problems reported, however Unity's properties in Little London and Woodhouse (102) account for just 9.6% of our stock. This means that tenants living in reported more than twice the number of neighbourhood complaints we would expect; given the number of properties.

This correlates with the earlier findings that residents living in Leicester Close and Devon Close were among the least satisfied tenants with there are as a place to live.

Beeston, Crossgates, Harehills and Meanwood too, also reported more neighbourhood problems than Unity would typically given the number of properties we own each of these respective areas.

On the other hand, only 15 neighbourhood problems were reported by means of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey by tenants living in Chapeltown, despite 28.6% of Unity's stock being in this area. Perhaps surprisingly, Chapeltown has the lowest concentration of neighbourhood problems of all areas, with only 1 in 20 household reporting issues with their neighbourhood or community.

The only exception is Hyde Park, where no neighbourhood issues were reported despite Unity holding 26 properties in this area.

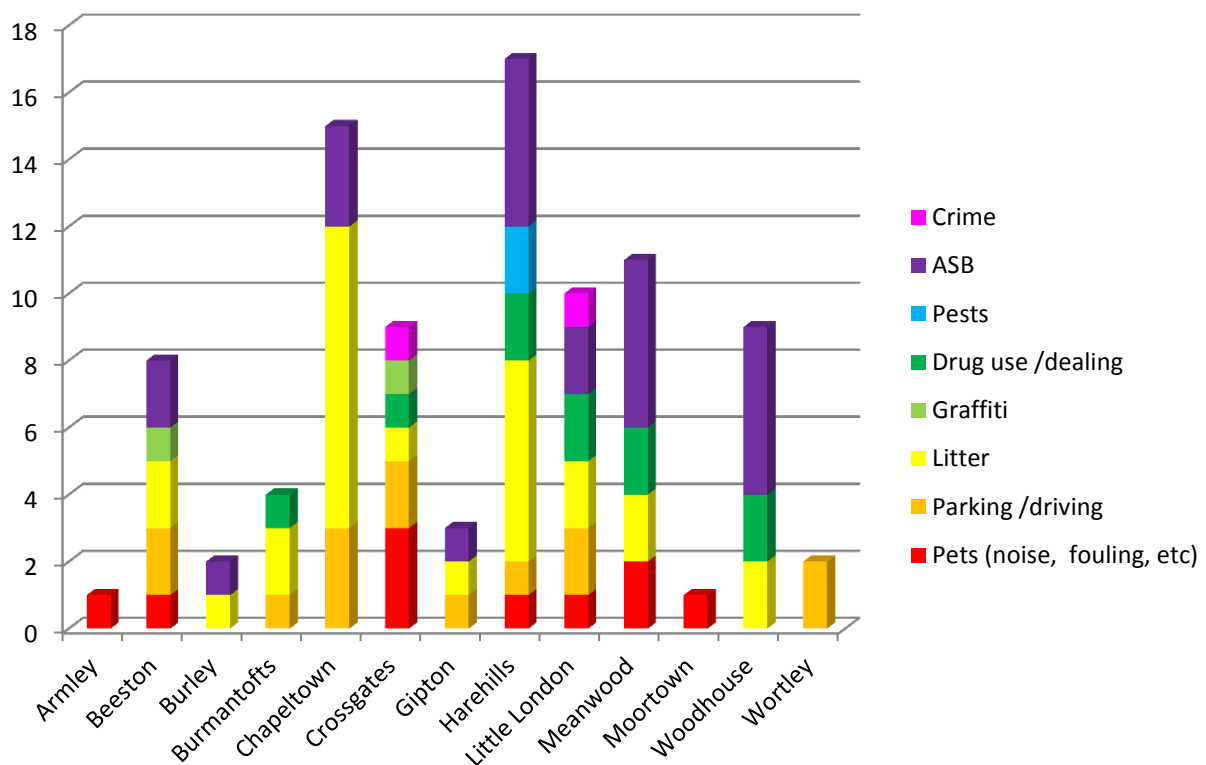


Figure 26: Breakdown of neighbourhood problem type by area

Of course, in order to best make use of this information, Unity must analyse the type of neighbourhood problems reported in each area. Figure 26 illustrates that the most common neighbourhood problems are litter, parking and/or dangerous driving and anti-social behaviour, although the scale of the problem varies between each area.

In Chapeltown, for instance the majority of neighbourhood problems fall into the categories of litter and parking and/or dangerous driving. Of course while these issues may affect someone’s satisfaction with their neighbourhood, they are perhaps not as serious as problems such as drug dealing and other crime which are – according to this survey – relatively rare.

In Harehills, not only did respondents report the highest number of neighbourhood problems but also the biggest range.

In Meanwood and Woodhouse there is a high concentration of anti-social behaviour; higher than Unity would like in areas which are relatively small in size. 5 residents in Woodhouse reported problems with anti-social behaviour yet Unity only owns 34 properties in this area. This means that 1 in 7 households in Woodhouse are reporting problems with anti-social behaviour.

3.10 Ground maintenance complaints by area

A large number of the complaints reported in terms of maintenance were about the gardening and landscaping contractors.

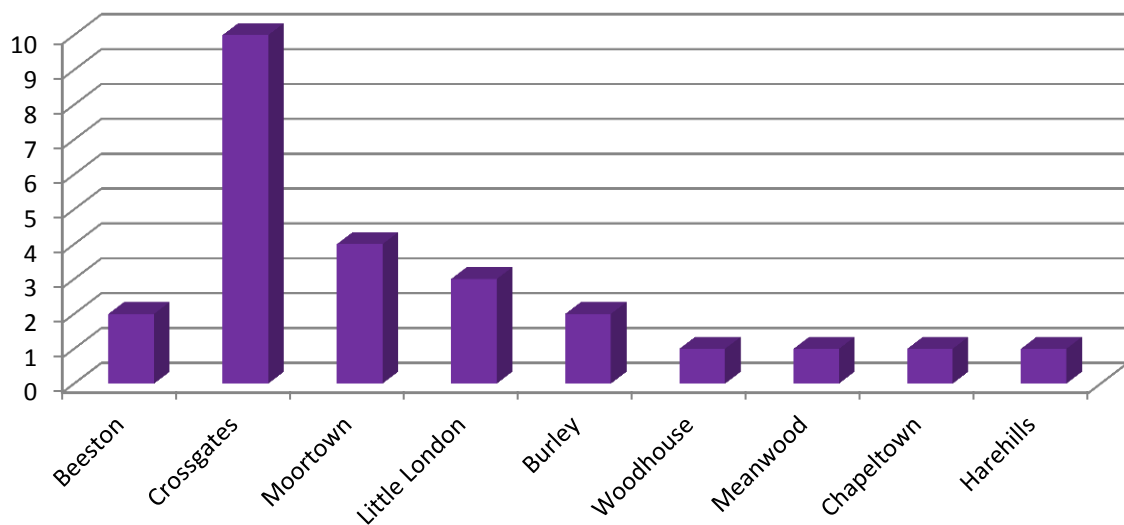


Figure 27: Breakdown of ground maintenance complaints by area

Figure 27 shows that a total of 25 complaints were received about gardening and landscaping by means of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey. This is disproportionate to the total number of complaints about Unity’s services.

It is worth considering that the Tenant Satisfaction Survey was issued at a time when there was a break between gardening contractors, and this had been noted by several of the respondents:

"We have all spoken about the grass – it hasn't been cut for months and is looking very scruffy. The gardening service is very poor".

The area of Crossgates yielded the highest volume of complaints about ground maintenance (10). The majority of these properties were on one estate, Thornfield Way, which has a large expanse of grass. It is perhaps not surprising that these tenants were quick to notice the absence of the gardening contractors.

Unity has since appointed a new gardening contractor who has been working very hard to make up for the period of absence during the break between contractors. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Unity tenants have been impressed with the work of the new gardening contractors so far. Perhaps if Unity was to conduct the survey again, we would not see such high volumes of complaints in this area.

3.11 Planned maintenance enquiries by type

A number of tenants used the Tenant Satisfaction Survey as a means of enquiring as to when items would be replaced in their homes. Many of these tenants do not appear to appreciate component life-cycles (for instance, Unity would expect a kitchen to last 15 years before it needs to be completely replaced, and a bathroom should ideally last 25 years): *'I have been living in my house for five years and would like my kitchen work done'*.

A number of tenants also expressed frustration that neighbouring properties were updated before their own: *'As others have had a new kitchen fitted I would be grateful if I also had a new kitchen fitted...I need one ASAP'*. Of course, there could be a number of reason why all kitchen/bathrooms on the estate are not replaced at the same time. If for instance, a tenant moves out as their kitchen is nearing the end of its life, Unity would aim to fit a new kitchen while the property is void.

In each case where the tenant made an enquiry about planned maintenance, they were advised as to when the item in question would be replaced in their home (if it was due to be replaced in the next five years). We also published our 5 year planned-maintenance schedule in our Autumn 2013 newsletter.

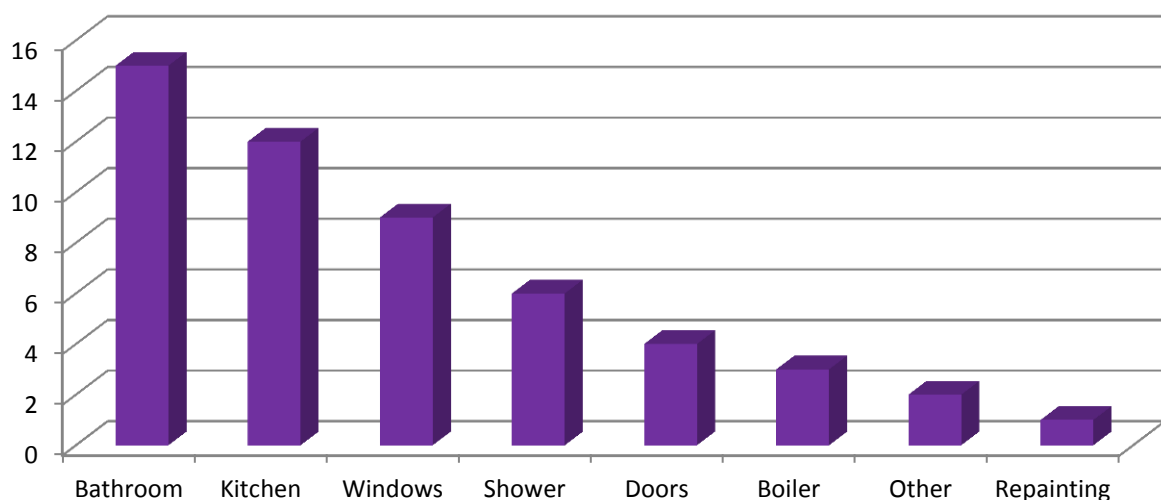


Figure 27: Breakdown of planned maintenance requests by type

Figure 27 shows that the most common requests for replacements were bathrooms and kitchens, which is to be expected as bathrooms and kitchens have the longest component life cycles:

How long should they last?			
Component	Decent Homes target life-cycle	Unity target life-cycle	Number of requests
Bathroom	30 years	25 years	15
Kitchen	20 years	15 years	12

While 52 enquires were made regarding Unity’s planned maintenance programme by means of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey (some respondents enquired about more than one item), Figure 28 shows that the majority of the respondents were still satisfied with the way Unity deals with repairs and maintenance.

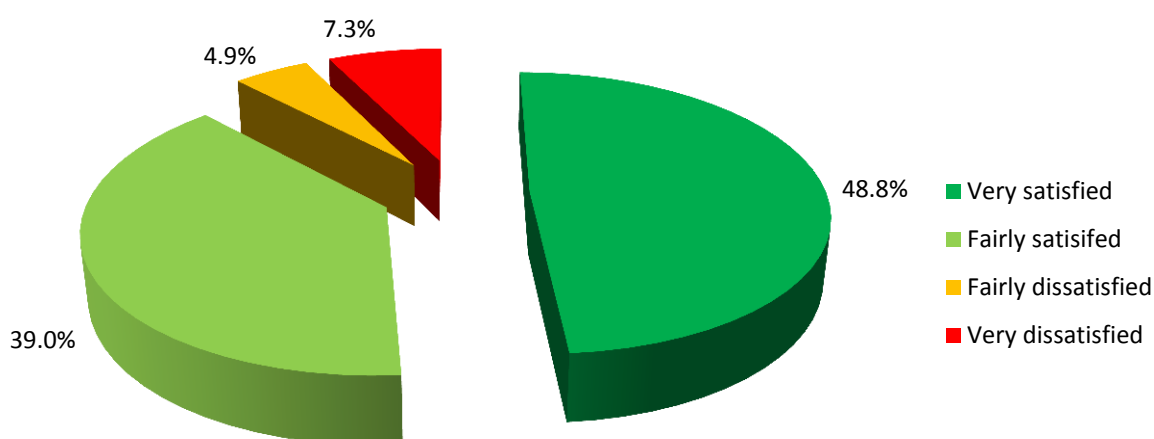


Figure 28: Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance service of tenants enquiring about planned maintenance

Figure 28 illustrates that 87.8% of respondents who made an enquiry or complaint about planned maintenance were generally satisfied with the way that Unity deals with repairs and maintenance. The average satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is 90.3% indicating that tenants awaiting replacements or refurbishments in their home are almost as satisfied as those who reported no issues.

3.12 Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance service of tenants with outstanding repairs.

At the time that the Tenant Satisfaction Survey was issued, a number of tenants had outstanding repairs. Given the number of properties Unity owns, this was to be expected. It is worth examining whether tenants who had outstanding repairs at the time of the survey were more or less likely to be satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.

The breadth of the repairs is too wide to examine closely in this report, but it is possible to deduce that tenants awaiting a repair were less likely to be satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service – but not by a large margin. Perhaps some respondents thought that by answering ‘very dissatisfied’ their repair might get dealt with more quickly.

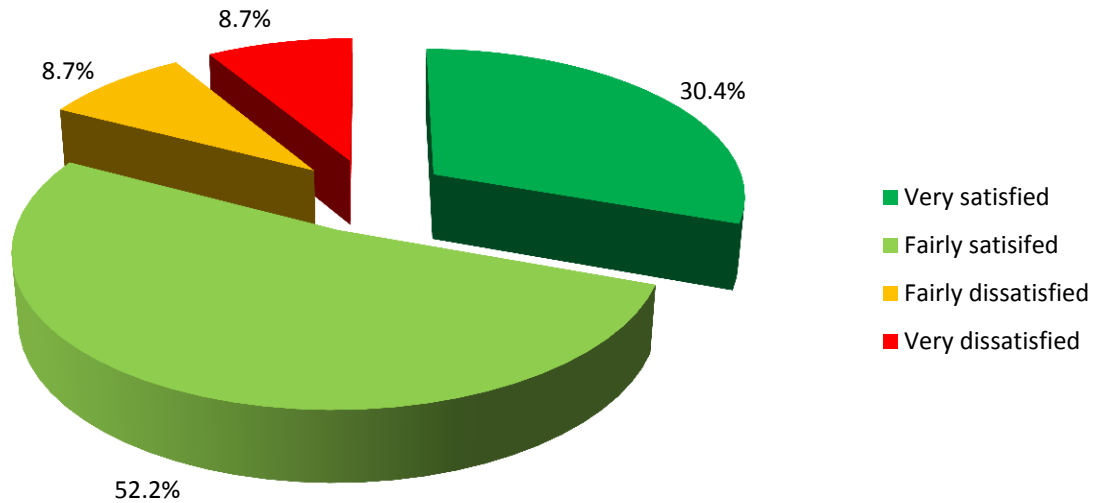


Figure 29: Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance service of tenants with outstanding repairs

On the whole however, the majority of tenants awaiting a repair were still satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service in general (82.6%).

3.12 Compliments

The Tenant Satisfaction Survey also invited tenants to make positive comments about Unity's services, and a number of tenants took this opportunity:

'When a fault is reported you are asked if there is anything else you can be helped with. Keep up the good work and may Unity continue to provide homes for people for a very long time'.

'Unity staff have been great, especially in customer service. The staff are very welcoming and that's the impression I get when I walk into the Unity premises. They keep you up to date with services and are very informative.'

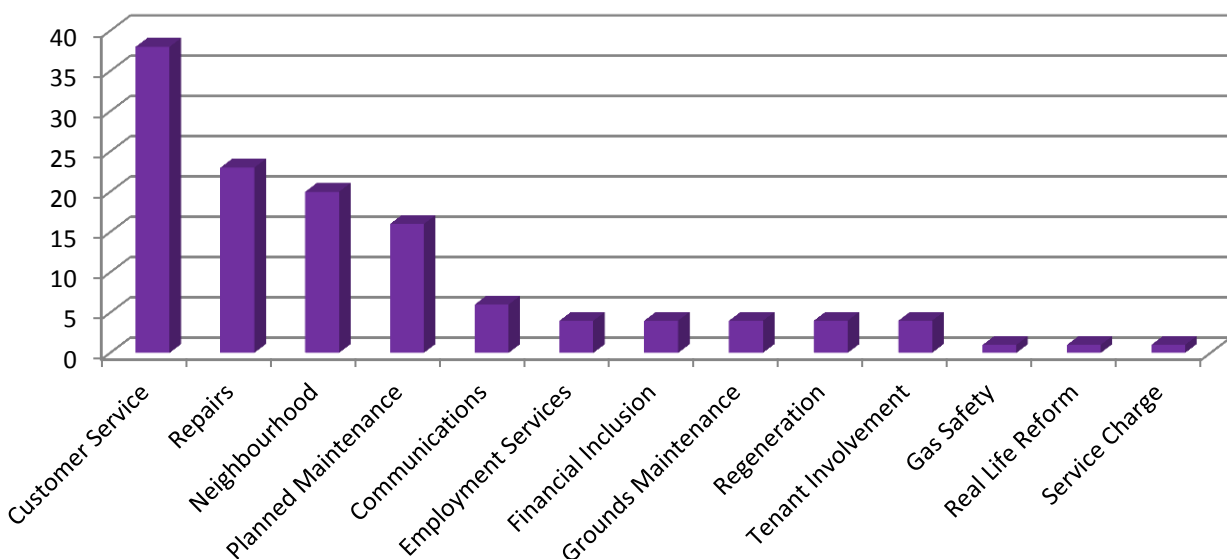


Figure 30: Compliments by area of service

By far the most complimented area of service was Customer Service. Respondents were particularly impressed with the friendliness, the helpfulness and the professionalism of the Customer Service Team. As it is the Customer Service Team which our tenants have the most contact with, it is reassuring to hear that they are well-liked. It is also worth noting that unlike many other areas of service, including repairs and planned maintenance, not one of the 368 respondents made a complaint about the Customer Service Team.

While it has already been pointed out in this report that some respondents used the Tenant Satisfaction Survey as a means of reporting repairs and/or planned maintenance issues, it is also worth noting that the repairs and maintenance department also received a number of compliments which is testament to the high quality service they provide:

'You have recently changed my window and given me a new kitchen. We highly appreciate this. I am also happy with the recent letter mentioning when all the other work will be completed in the future. I think you're doing a great job.'

The spectrum of compliments also went as far as to include our Employment Service Team, our Financial Inclusion Service and opportunities for residents to get involved in decision-making processes by means of our Tenant Panel. Examples are as follows:

Area of Service	Compliment
Communications	I like the fact Unity stays in contact regularly with updates and newsletters. I feel well-informed.
Customer Service	I have been a tenant of Unity for 20 years in October and have always had a good relationship with them. Long may they continue.
Employment Services	I have found Kelly [Unity's Outreach Support Worker] to be helpful. She always sent me daily job opportunities and now I have secured a full time post.
Financial Inclusion	Idea of Inclusion Officers has been fantastic. He helped me a lot.
Gas Safety	Arranging gas safety, keeping an eye on things.
Ground Maintenance	I like that there is a regular gardener and the new bin area
IT	Online reporting of repairs
Neighbourhood Management	On the whole, the work that Unity has put into the area, in sifting out the drug dealers is amazing. Kitchener Place is so much more peaceful and the new neighbours are lovely and polite. It's obvious you care about us. Thank you.
Planned Maintenance	Like that we got new boilers and kitchens before there was a problem there was a problem. House has been easier to heat since then. Also insulated well.
Regeneration	It's the building of new homes and giving an opportunity to those who want to buy and own their home as well as the renovations Unity is doing across their properties.
Repairs	I like the fact that they listen and are very prompt with repairs. The workmen that have visited my home over the last few years are always friendly and will go the extra mile if necessary.
Service Charge	Upgrading the lights on landing and stairs. I always thought what a waste of energy being on all the time. Well done.
Tenant Involvement	The newsletter makes an interesting read and also nice to know that the tenants can get involved.