

Listening to residents and acting on what they say

Thank you for your feedback

Havering Housing Services

In 2020, in the middle of a national pandemic, we decided to go ahead and ask our residents what they think of our service and what we could do to improve. We sent questionnaires to over 12,000 tenants and leaseholders, which included satisfaction questions for key areas of service such as; homes, neighbourhood, repairs, staff contact, priorities and communication. The consultation brought back 3,059 questionnaire responses with nearly 900 people taking the time to give us additional comments.

So what are we doing with all this feedback?

We are keen to be open and transparent with our residents, and so we are publishing the results, along with an action plan that sets out how we have taken on board what you've told us and the actions we are taking to make improvements to the service we give you.



Havering
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Council Housing Services – listening to residents and acting on what they say

Headlines from the survey

Overall satisfaction levels: -

Tenant satisfaction (including Supported Housing) - **73%**

Leaseholder satisfaction - **51%***

What residents are most positive about:

- Housing Services providing a home that's safe and secure: **75% satisfied**
- Value for money of rent: **75% satisfied**
- The neighbourhood as a place to live: **74% satisfied**
- Overall quality of homes: **73% satisfied.**

What residents think about the service they receive from us:

- **75%** are satisfied with value for money of their rent
- **69%** are satisfied with the overall service they receive
- **64%** are satisfied that Housing Services is easy to deal with.

You told us your top priorities are:

1. Repairs and maintenance (Tenants)
2. Value for money (Leaseholders)
3. Dealing with anti-social behaviour (Tenants and Leaseholders)
4. Quality of their home (Tenants)
5. Property and repairs (Leaseholders).

*When compared with a number of other London Boroughs, the majority of results are above the average.

Although we received lots of compliments for our services, good is not good enough, we want to provide and excellent customer service to all our tenants and leaseholders and we will work with you to make sure we improve.

Based on what “you said” our top five priorities for improvement are as follows:

1. Listening to residents views and acting upon them: 47% satisfied

This is what we did or are doing:

If you would like to be involved in helping us with this important strategy, please contact:

getinvolved@haverling.gov.uk

- **Resident Satisfaction** – the results show us that on the whole Leaseholders were less satisfied than tenants. So our **Home Ownership team** are now developing new satisfaction surveys to give residents the opportunity to tell us what you thought of the service you received straight away afterwards.

We will update you about progress against these actions and our performance via the 'At the Heart' ([take the bit about a link out – Will can you actually supply a link for them to sign up please?](#))



Patrick Odling-Smee, Director of Housing says –

“We are committed to respecting our residents’ views and being accountable. The feedback we’ve received from this survey and others is currently being collated and will be used to develop the principles for our new Resident Engagement Strategy”

2. Satisfaction with repairs to communal areas: 47% satisfied

This is what we did or are doing:

- **Property and Repairs** produced a large number of additional comments; whilst we received some praise for contractors continuing to provide a good service under difficult circumstances last year, some residents felt we need to cut down on multiple visits and try to avoid delays. Repairs in communal areas was highlighted as a service where we need to make improvements.
- We have completed a stock investment survey across all our council managed buildings. This gives us up to date information on the condition of our properties and will feed into our **Asset Management Strategy**, which will set out our long-term plan of what works need to be carried out and how we are committed to keeping residents secure and happy in their homes.



Garry Knights, Assistant Director for Property Services says –

“We are currently re-procuring our repairs and voids (empty homes) service and the new contract will have a greater emphasis on quality rather than cost. The successful contractor will be expected to provide efficiency savings alongside a high-quality service and performance will be measured against a wider range of metrics including Residents’ satisfaction, right first time and void quality. Residents are fully involved in the procurement process.”

3. Handling and outcome of complaints: 28% satisfied

This is what we did or are doing:

- The **Housing Ombudsman** has introduced a new Code of Complaint Handling. The purpose of the code is to enable us to resolve complaints raised by residents quickly and to use the learning to drive service improvement. Havering Council has completed a self-assessment against the code and we are already meeting all of the requirements. So, the focus this year will be on improving our **learning from complaints** and resolving issues before they turn into complaints.
- Sometimes residents make a formal complaint because they are not aware of other avenues for resolution of their issues, or they are vulnerable and need support to resolve their problem. This is especially true of families at risk of homelessness, and those seeking a new home via the housing register. We are therefore focusing on offering good advice and support to these residents helping them to find the right settled accommodation for them.



Darren Alexander, Assistant Director for Housing Demand says –

“We have a new 5 year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2020-2025 which outlines our desire to prevent and reduce the risk of homelessness for all households who approach us. Also as part of this strategy we are reviewing our Allocations Policy to better meet the needs of local people in preparation for the allocation of 3,500 new homes by 2028.”



4. Handling and outcome of Anti-Social Behaviour cases: 22% satisfied

This is what we did or are doing:

All our residents have the right to enjoy a **secure and peaceful environment**.

We are fully committed to supporting victims of **Anti-social behaviour** in helping resolve their concerns.

More information about ASB can be found on our website on: www.havering.gov.uk

- **Tackling Anti-social behaviour (ASB)** – it's sometimes difficult to achieve high satisfaction, as ASB can have so much of an impact on individuals and it is hard to solve some problems without intervention from the Courts. However, we want to achieve a positive experience for residents if they report ASB, so we intend to commission an independent review of our processes and performance, which will provide greater insight about where we need to improve.
- Tackling ASB demands a joined up working approach between Housing Officers, Community Safety and Enforcement teams So we all work closely together with the Police and other agencies to keep residents safe and secure in their homes and communities
- We will be publishing more information about ASB, what you can expect from us when you report it, and what we expect from you, to **help us help you**.



Evonne Hudson, Assistant Director for Housing Management says –

“We know that anti- social behaviour and nuisance, can have a detrimental impact to those affected. Managing ASB and tenancy breaches therefore remains a top priority for the housing management service. We will continue to work to improve how we manage complaints, ensuring that we have a well-trained team that work to address the issues and concerns. Our goal is to use a range of tools and interventions to resolve the nuisance, so that all residents can enjoy living in their homes”

5. Although 74% of residents were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live overall – when asked if their neighbourhood had improved or got worse in the last three years 43% of residents think it has got worse

This is what we did or are doing:

- **Neighbourhoods and estate services** - feedback from the survey told us that whilst some residents are very happy with where they live and the services they receive from the Council, there are some aspects of estate services, such as communal cleaning and grounds maintenance where we feel we could improve.
- We work closely with the Council Environmental team to agree the standards we need to meet to keep our estates and buildings clean and looking good. We are committed to ensuring all residents live in neighbourhood to be proud of and we will continue to pursue this aim.
- Of course a neighbourhood also is many things to many people, it's not only about your home feeling safe and well maintained, but also what is available to you in your **local community**.
- The Council launched the online community hub to bring the community together during the covid-19 crisis last year. The 'one-stop shop' offers a wide range of tools for residents to get Council and voluntary community help, if they need it.
- We are planning to develop face to face community hubs, after the pandemic crisis is over, where residents can directly speak to Council and Voluntary sector services staff.
- As well as bringing communities together, we also want to support vulnerable residents to **live independently and well**. Our Supported Housing offers a variety of accommodation to suit the needs of Havering residents.



Katri Wilson, Assistant Director of Supported Housing says –

“We are supporting Havering older residents in our Sheltered Housing services, offering dementia-friendly schemes, with staff onsite providing support, and Telecare offering services out of hours. The schemes offer caring services to vulnerable residents that are safe and secure, with adapted facilities for people with disabilities.”

There are many more things that we will be introducing over the coming year to continuously improve the service we deliver to you.

If you would like to contact us, please do so on:
01708 434000



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