



Tel: 01706 211524
Fax: 01706 212716
www.qclmr.co.uk

*Hollingrove House, 155 Burnley Road, Rossendale BB4 8HH email: barbara@qclmr.co.uk
doug@qclmr.co.uk
jan@qclmr.co.uk*

Waverley Borough Council

STATUS

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2008

Prepared For Waverley Borough Council
Prepared By Barbara Bowyer
Ref 2804tenantrep
Date September 2008

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	
Method	1
Comparison with previous surveys	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
DETAILED RESULTS	
Sample profile	9
Length of tenancy	15
Satisfaction with landlord (NI 160)	17
Satisfaction with housing and neighbourhood	19
Satisfaction with services	21
Contact with the council	27
Repairs	30
Communication and information	32
Anti-social behaviour	38
Tenant Participation Compacts	40
Accessing services	42
Other comments	46
APPENDICES	
Technical appendix	48
Questionnaire	

Introduction

This report summarises the main findings from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out in accordance with CLG guidelines, to meet the requirement for the New Performance Indicator NI160.

Method

Questionnaires were mailed to 1,576 council tenants on 2nd July 2008 – a random sample of 1300 general needs tenants and a census of 276 sheltered housing tenants.

A total of 891 completed questionnaires were received after two reminders, together with 6 marked as 'gone away' or 'not known at this address'. This represents an effective response rate of 56%.

A detailed description of the methodology used is given in the Technical Appendix.

A copy of the questionnaire used is appended to this document and is based on the STATUS standard tenant satisfaction questionnaire published by the National Housing Federation.

Note that for the requirements for NI 160 data for general needs tenants only is to be supplied to the Audit Commission – data for sheltered housing tenants is for internal use only to make overall data comparable with previous surveys.

Comparison with Previous Surveys

Where possible results have been compared with the BVPI Tenant Satisfaction Surveys carried out in 2003 and 2006.

It must be borne in mind that all survey data is subject to a statistical margin of error, so care must be taken when interpreting changes between the surveys. Where an observed difference between the surveys is within the margin of error then it can be said that the results are effectively the same – i.e. the difference is not statistically significant. As a guideline a difference of less than 4% will generally not be significant.

Where appropriate, comments are made on the statistical significance or otherwise of the data shown.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Respondent profile

More than half of all the tenants responding to the survey half are aged 65 or over (55%), with a marked difference between general needs tenants and tenants in sheltered/supported housing – half of the latter being aged over 85 and a further 39% aged between 65 and 84.

A large proportion of tenants live in single person households with the occupant being aged over 60 (45%); 20% are two person households where at least one is aged over 60.

Again there is a marked difference between general needs tenants and tenants in sheltered/supported housing where the vast majority are elderly single people living alone (90%).

In line with the age profile, 86% of tenants in sheltered/supported housing are retired. Amongst general needs tenants almost half are retired, and around a third working.

There is little difference between general needs tenants and those living in sheltered/supported housing in terms of the proportion claiming a disability or illness (50% of the former and 56% of the latter), though there are many more wheelchair users amongst those living in sheltered housing (21% compared with 8% in general needs housing).

Overall, 62% of tenants have a net weekly income of less than £200, with 81% of tenants in sheltered/supported housing being under the £200 threshold, the majority of whom are reliant on pensions and benefits.

Length of tenancy

Overall, half have been a tenant of the council for more than 20 years, with 30% having been in their particular accommodation for that length of time.

Tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to have been tenants of the council for a shorter time than general needs tenants (32% of the former having been a tenant for more than 20 years compared with 55% of the latter), and to have lived in the current home for a shorter period.

Satisfaction with landlord (NI 160)

The majority of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by the council as their landlord - 85% - which is significantly higher than the level seen in 2006 (78%).

Note that this is the question relating to the New National Indicator NI 160, and will be reported to the Audit Commission based on general needs tenants only.

Satisfaction amongst general needs tenants is 83%.

Sheltered housing tenants show a significantly higher level of overall satisfaction (94%).

Satisfaction with housing and neighbourhood

When asked to say how satisfied they are with a number of aspects of their home and neighbourhood, satisfaction levels are high; 82% are satisfied with the overall quality of their home, 77% with the general condition of the property, 79% with the value for money for their rent, and 87% with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

There was a big (statistically significant) difference in response to these questions between general needs tenants and those in sheltered/supported housing. Where the proportion of general needs tenants responding 'very satisfied' ranged from 24% to 50%, for tenants in sheltered/supported housing the range was 55% to 64%.

While questions relating to the condition and quality of accommodation and value for money featured on previous questionnaires, the wording of the questions was different and so data is not directly comparable.

Satisfaction with services

When asked to say how satisfied they are with a number of aspects of service provided by the council as their landlord, the great majority of those with an opinion said they are satisfied with the advice available on rent payments (80%), and how enquiries are dealt with (79%).

While for the remaining three types of service fewer than two-thirds of those who expressed a view said they are satisfied, the majority of the remainder opted for the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position suggesting that they have no view on these issues.

Furthermore, there was a large number of tenants who expressed no view at all on these three issues – i.e. did not answer the question at all, or ticked the no opinion box (60%).

If those who responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied are taken out of the equation on the assumption that they have no opinion on each of the matters, satisfaction levels would rise to the following levels:-

Advice on rent payments – 97%

Advice on moving home – 87%

Support provided to new tenants – 89%

Support provided to vulnerable tenants – 82%

How enquiries are dealt with generally – 90%

Again, sheltered housing tenants generally show a higher level of satisfaction than general needs tenants.

When asked which three services from a choice of six they consider to be most important, repairs and maintenance heads the list by far with 81% of tenants including this in their list of three.

The overall quality of their home comes in second position with 58% mentioning this.

Least important, at the bottom of the list is taking tenants' views into account (24% including this in their list).

The remaining four issues receive relatively equal weight with around a third of tenants selecting each.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour appears to be more of a concern to general needs tenants (32%) than sheltered housing tenants (21%).

Tenants in sheltered/supported housing, on the other hand are much more likely to see keeping tenants informed as a priority (43% compared with 29% of general needs tenants), and taking tenants views into account (34% vs 21%).

Tenants were presented with a list of potential problems and were asked to say to what extent each is a problem in their area. Car parking heads the list, with 18% citing this as a very big problem and a further 17% as a fairly big problem.

Rubbish and litter comes in second position, though some way behind with 20% seeing this as a big problem in their neighbourhood.

Only two other issues are cited as being either a very big problem or a fairly big problem by more than 10% of tenants –noisy neighbours (12%) and disruptive children/teenagers (12%).

Tenants living in general needs properties are rather more likely to see these issues as problems in their neighbourhood than are sheltered housing tenants.

Contact with the council

Overall, 70% of tenants claimed to have contacted the council as their landlord in the last twelve months.

In the majority of cases the contact was made by telephone (80%) and the subject was repairs (76%).

In the majority of cases those who contacted the council were positive about their experience, claiming that it was easy to get hold of the right person (77%), that staff were helpful (88%), and were able to deal with their problem (78%).

Fewer, however were satisfied with the final outcome (69%), with 22% being dissatisfied (the remainder opting for the neutral neither position).

General needs tenants are much more likely to have contacted the council in the last twelve months (77%) than tenants in sheltered/supported housing (36%), though ratings of the way the enquiry was handled are higher for sheltered housing tenants.

Response to these questions has changed little over the last three surveys (2003, 2006 and 2008).

Repairs

Overall 80% of all tenants are satisfied with the way the council deals with repairs and maintenance.

While there was a slight dip in satisfaction between 2003 and 2006 (down from 79% to 75%), the position was recovered in 2008.

Again, tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to be more positive in their ratings, with 91% being satisfied compared with 77% of general needs tenants.

Overall, 68% of tenants have had a repair completed in the last twelve months, with the great majority happy with all aspects of the repair service - ranging from 78% rating the time taken before work started as either very good or good, to 92% happy with the attitude of workers.

Overall, 80% rated the quality of the repair as good – 49% rating it as very good.

As has been seen in response to other questions, sheltered housing tenants are generally more positive about their experience than are general needs tenants, with over 90% rating three of the six aspects of service as being very good or good. Furthermore, they are much more inclined towards the very good option than are general needs tenants.

Communications and information

When asked to indicate the methods they would prefer the council to use to inform or consult with tenants about issues that may affect them, the most popular choice would be by letter, which 75% of tenants selected.

Just over a quarter would favour telephone contact (28%) or prefer personal visits (26%).

The only other significant approach selected was via a magazine or newsletter which 29% would favour.

Sheltered housing tenants seem to be much more open to involvement with the council in terms of residents' groups (25% compared with 8% of general needs tenants selecting this method), and open meetings (13% vs 5%).

Overall, 67% of tenants with a view on the matter say they are satisfied that their views are being taken into account by the council. Only 10% expressed any degree of dissatisfaction, with a large group not expressing a view one way or the other - 22% opting for the neutral position.

Again, sheltered housing tenants tend to respond more positively than do general needs tenants, with 75% of the former satisfied compared with 65% of the latter (though the difference is not statistically significant).

Tenants are generally happy with the level of information they are given, with 83% rating the council as being very good (36%) or fairly good (47%) at keeping them informed about things which might affect them as a tenant.

Again, sheltered housing tenants tend to be more positive, with 87% giving a rating of very good or good compared with 79% of general needs tenants.

There was a steady decline between 2003 and 2008 on this issue, with the proportion rating the council as good at keeping tenants informed falling from 89% to 83% (a statistically significant difference). Note though that the difference is wholly accounted for by an increase in the neutral neither/nor position, with the proportion rating the council as poor actually falling slightly over this period.

When asked about opportunities for participation in management and decision making, a large proportion of tenants expressed no view on the issue – 25% responding neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Amongst those with an opinion, response was positive with 70% satisfied and 5% dissatisfied. Again, sheltered housing tenants tend to respond more positively (76% satisfied), than general needs tenants (68%) though the difference is not statistically significant.

Between 2003 and 2008 there was a steady, significant increase in the level of satisfaction amongst those who expressed a view on this issue – up from 58% in 2003 to 70% on the latest survey.

Anti-social behaviour

Overall, 9% of tenants say they have reported anti-social behaviour to the council in the last twelve months.

While around two-thirds said that getting hold of the right person was easy, and that staff were helpful, only 47% said that staff were able to deal with the problem; 36% claiming staff unable to help (the remainder responding neither/nor).

When asked how satisfied they were with the way the report was handled reaction was very mixed.

While 72% of those who reported an incident said they were satisfied with the advice provided by staff, fewer were satisfied with the follow up procedures (between 45% and 53%) and only 43% with the final outcome.

There is a significant group who were dissatisfied with the way things were handled, with 41% dissatisfied with the final outcome.

Note that data on this question specifically for sheltered housing tenants is statistically unreliable as it is based on only a handful of responses.

Tenant Participation Compacts

Half of all tenants are aware of Tenant Participation Compacts – somewhat below the 59% seen in 2006.

When asked to say how satisfied they are with their locally agreed compact, 24% replied neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Amongst the remainder the balance of opinion is favourable – 30% being very satisfied and 45% fairly satisfied.

Awareness of Tenants Participation Compacts is somewhat higher amongst general needs tenants (51%) than sheltered housing tenants (43%). While sheltered housing tenants show a higher level of satisfaction (80%) than general needs tenants (73%), data is statistically unreliable as there were only 45 sheltered housing tenants who expressed a view.

Accessing services

The vast majority of tenants are satisfied with housing services' main office opening hours – 52% being very satisfied, and 37% fairly satisfied, with little difference between general needs and sheltered housing tenants.

Use/likely use of the internet

Currently 23% of tenants say they use the internet (either at home, work or a public access point) – 27% of general needs tenants doing so, but only 7% of tenants in sheltered/supported housing.

While almost three quarters of those with access to the internet say they would use it to look up information about Waverley housing services, only 42% would use it to report repairs and only 23% would use it to pay their rent (representing only 5% of all tenants).

Preferred method of communication

When asked how they would prefer to contact housing services in the future, the telephone emerges as the most popular method, selected by more than three-quarters of tenants.

Almost equal proportions would opt for visiting the council offices (22%) and by letter (20%).

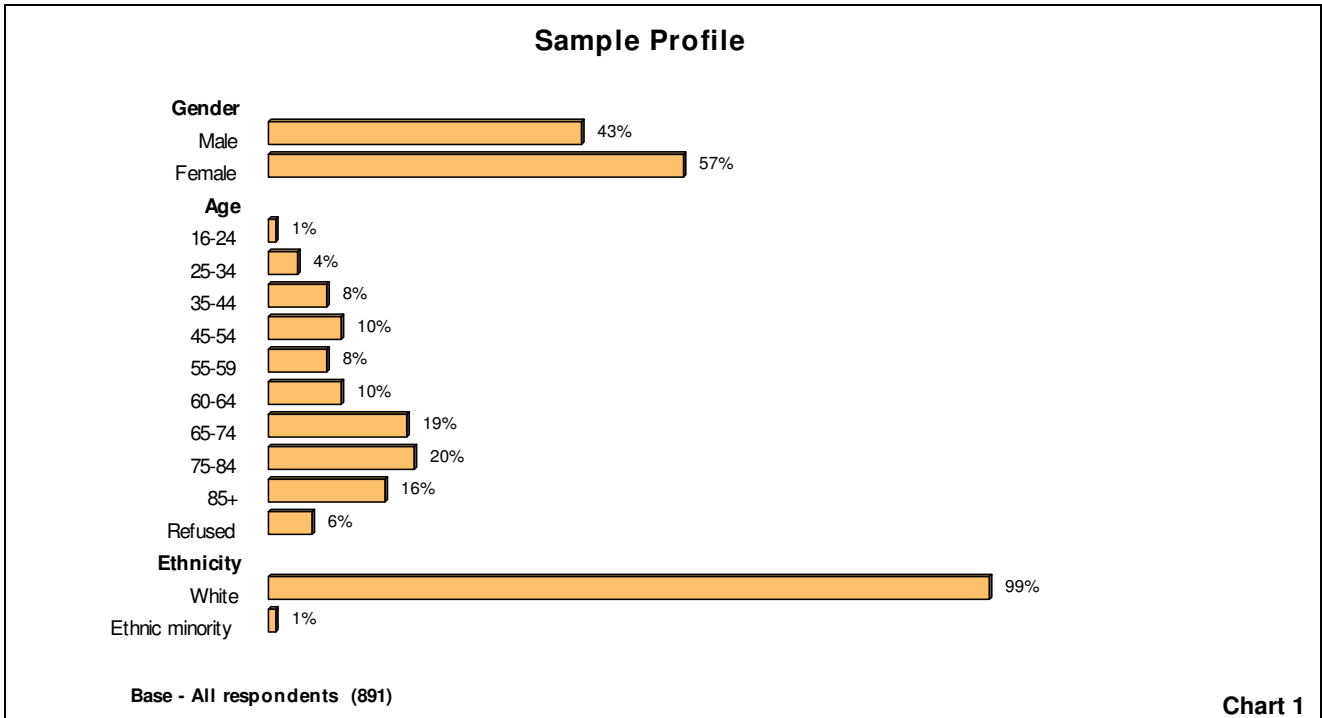
Satisfaction with rent collection service

Overall, 86% of tenants are satisfied with the rent collection service – 92% of sheltered housing tenants being satisfied compared with 84% of general needs tenants.

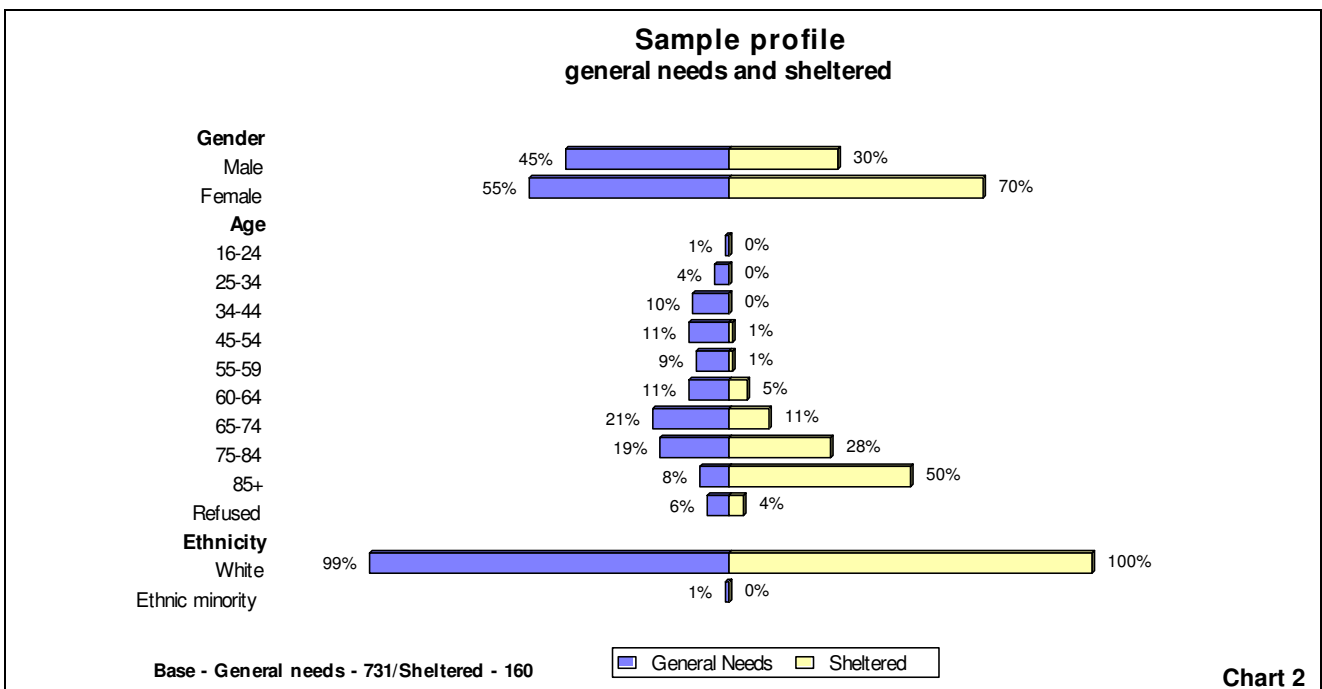
DETAILED FINDINGS

Respondent profile

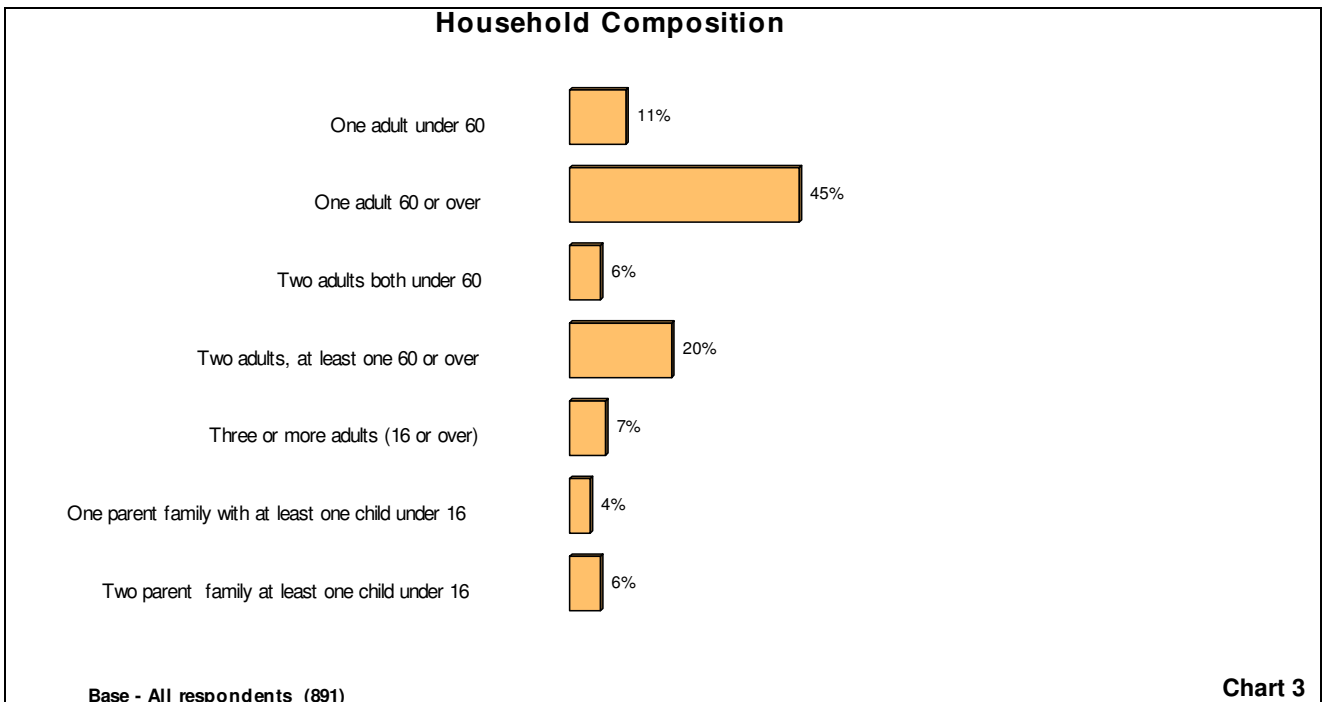
The chart below shows the profile of the sample of respondents for this survey in terms of gender, age and ethnicity, and this should reflect the profile of council tenants. The chart shows that more than half are aged 65 or over (55%).



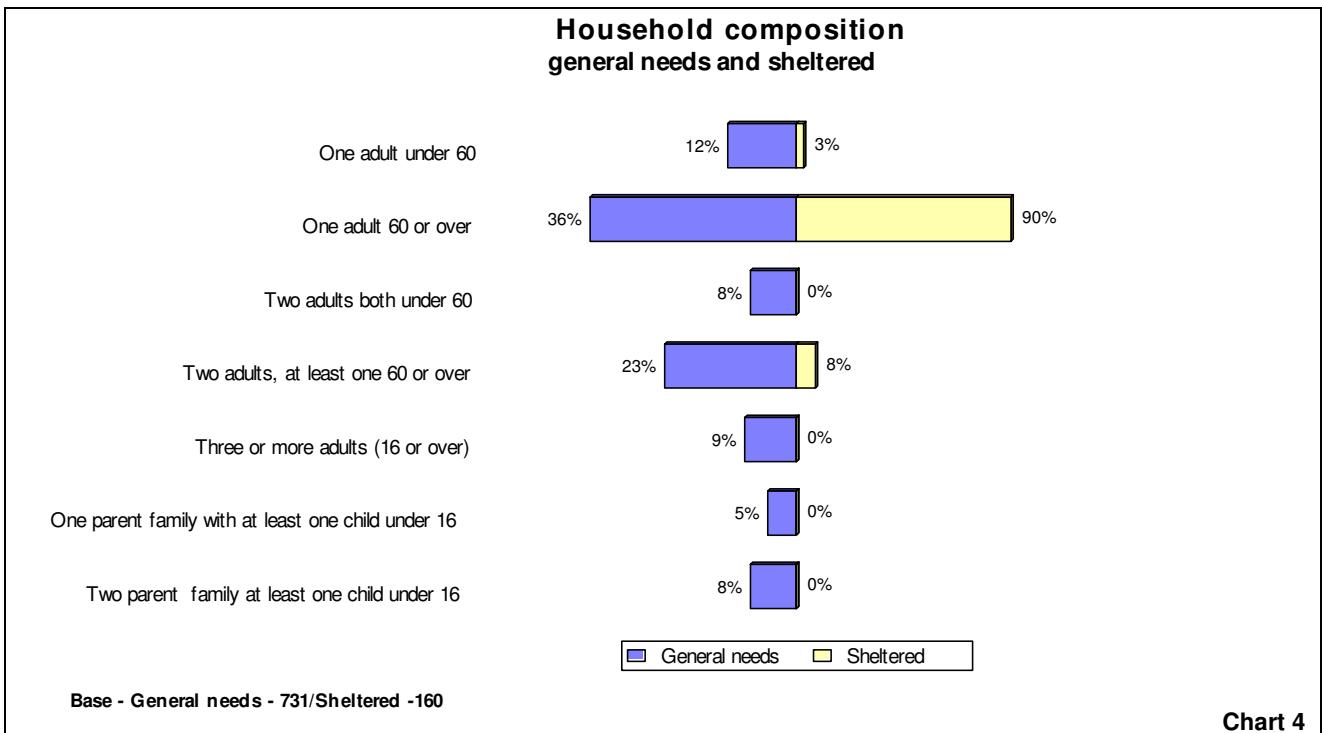
The chart below shows a marked difference in the age profile of general needs tenants and tenants in sheltered/supported housing – half of the latter being aged over 85 and a further 39% aged between 65 and 84. Furthermore, sheltered housing tenants are predominantly female (70%).



As reflected in the age profile, a large proportion of tenants live in single person households with the occupant being aged over 60 (45%); 20% are two person households where at least one is aged over 60. Only 10% of households claim to have children under 16 years of age.

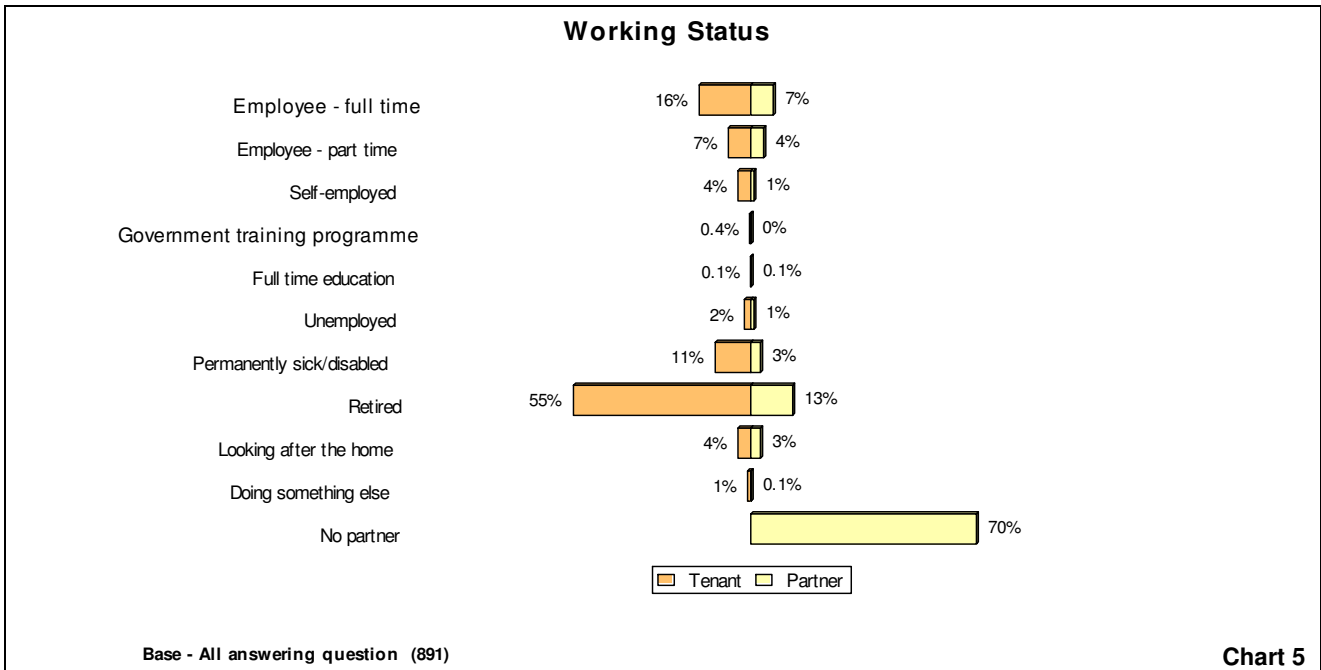


Again there is a marked difference between general needs tenants and tenants in sheltered/supported housing where the vast majority are elderly single people living alone (90%).

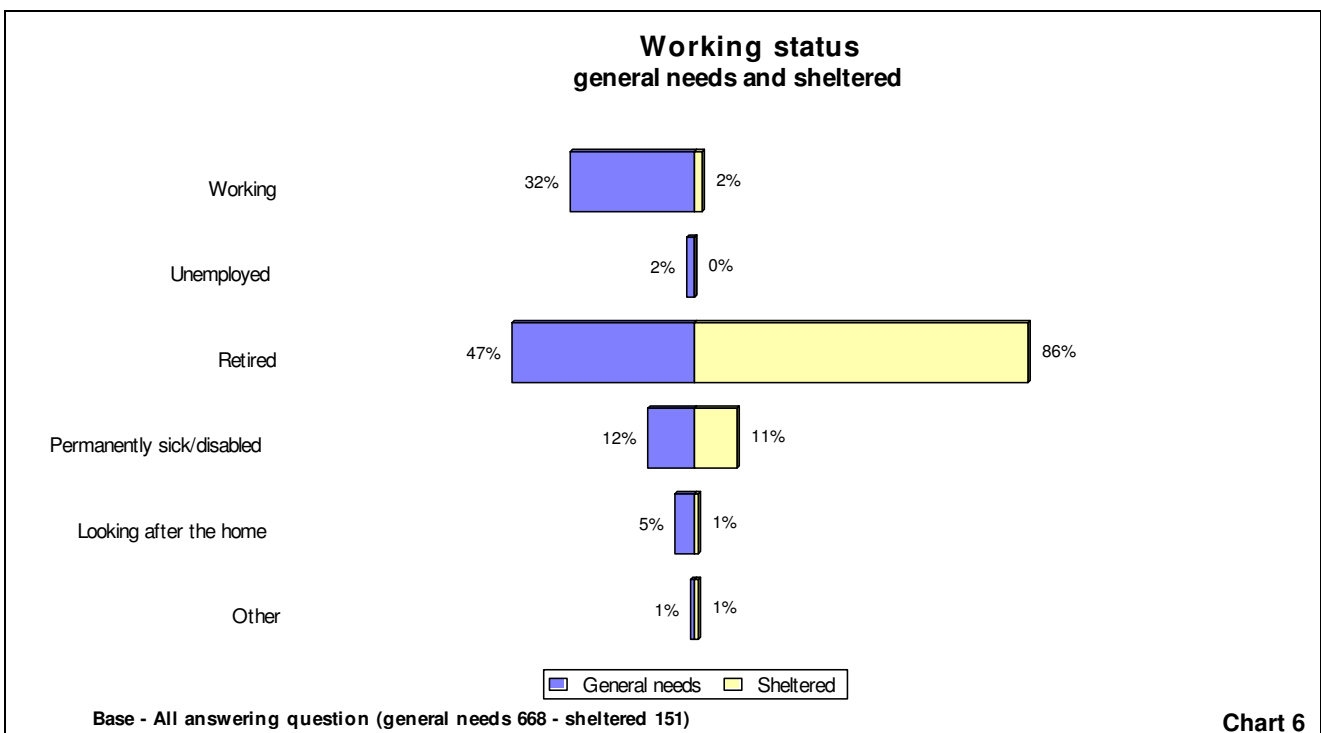


Only 27% of council tenants are working, with 55% being retired and 11% describing themselves as permanently sick or disabled.

Overall, 70% of those completing the questionnaire do not have a partner. Only 12% of tenants have a partner working either full or part time.

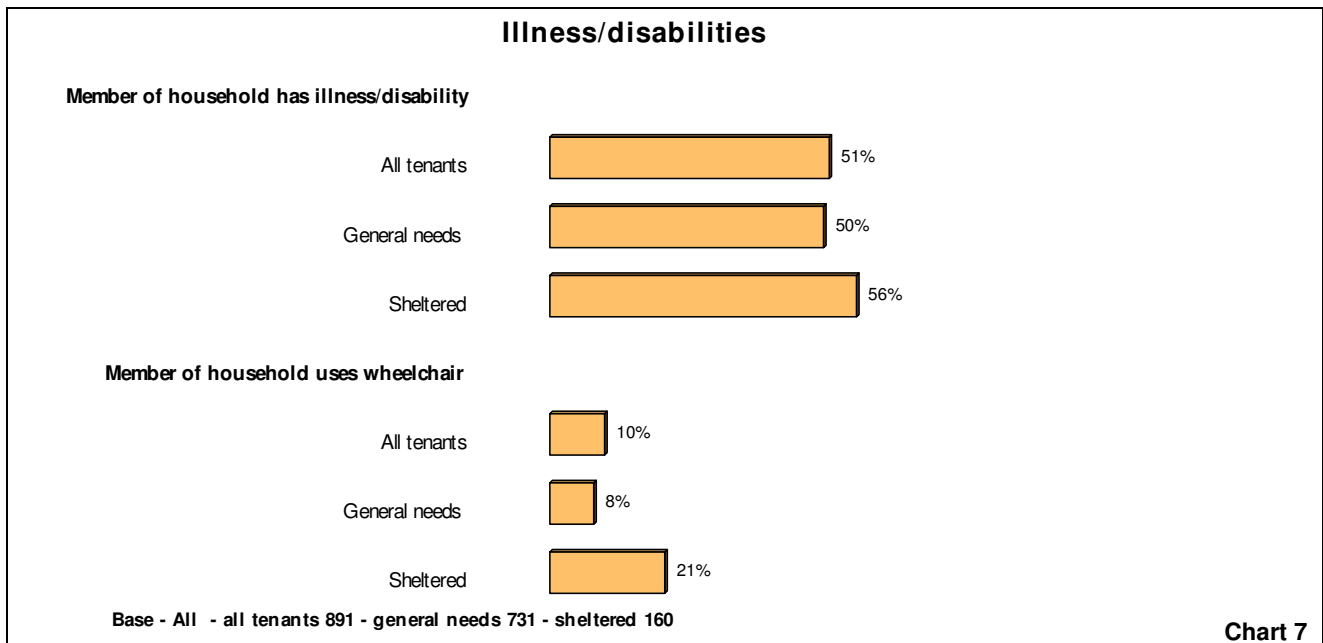


In line with the age profile, 86% of tenants in sheltered/supported housing are retired. Amongst general needs tenants just under half are retired, and around a third are working.

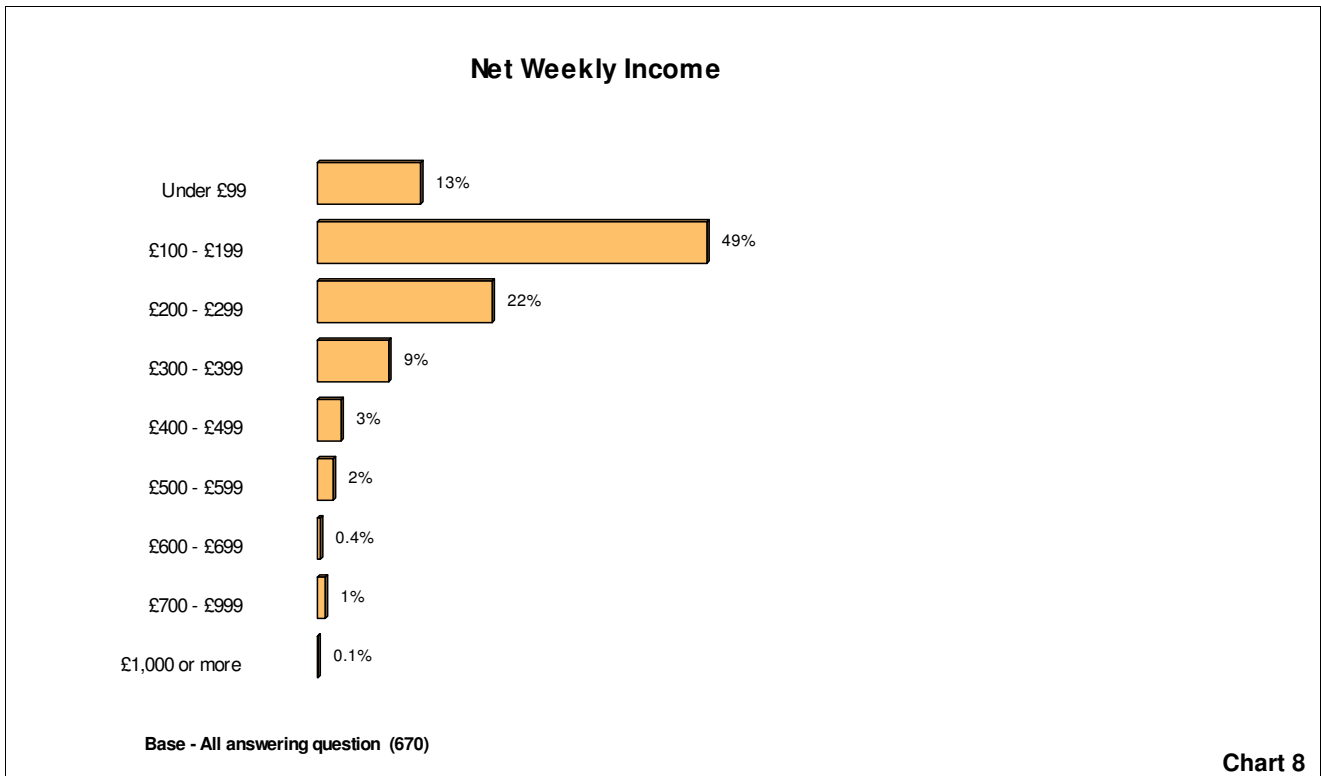


Half of all council tenants say that there is someone in their household who has a long term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they can do, including problems which are due to old age. In 10% of these households there is someone who uses a wheelchair.

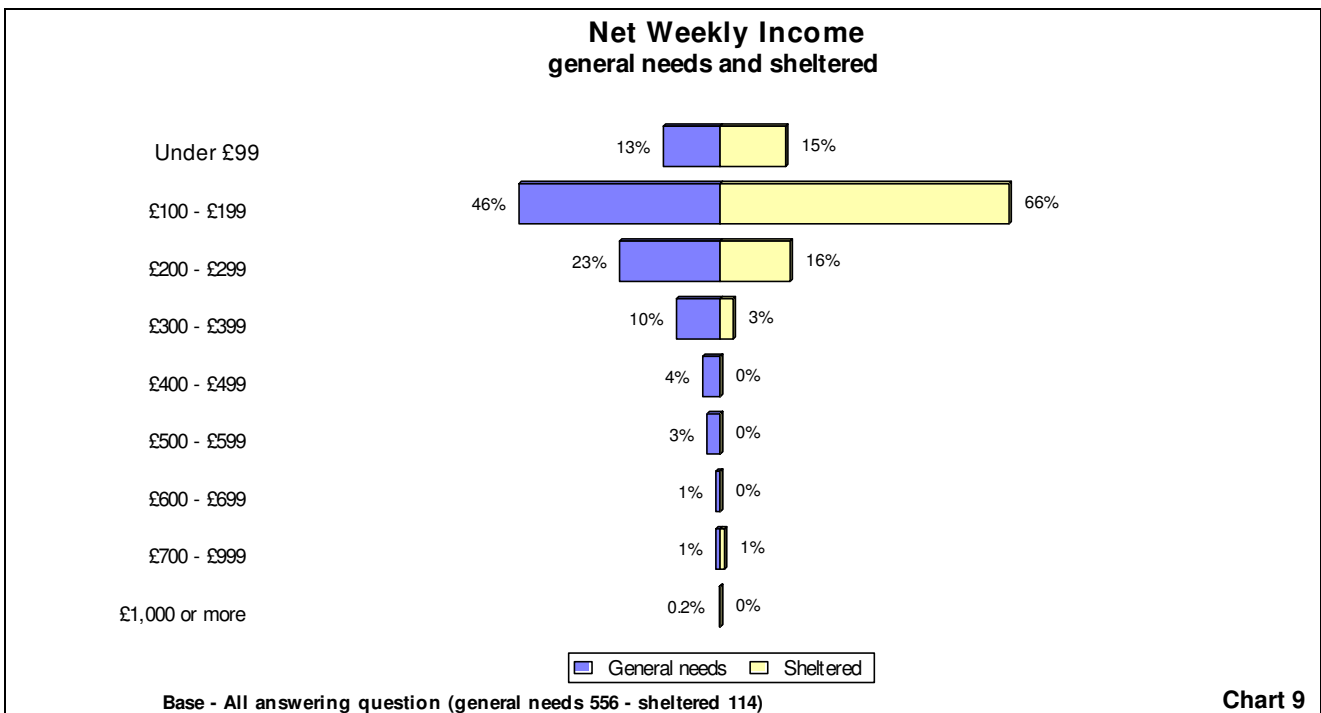
There is little difference between general needs tenants and those living in sheltered/supported housing in terms of the proportion claiming a disability or illness, though there are many more wheelchair users amongst those living in sheltered housing (21% compared with 8% in general needs housing).



Overall, 62% of tenants have a net weekly income of less than £200.

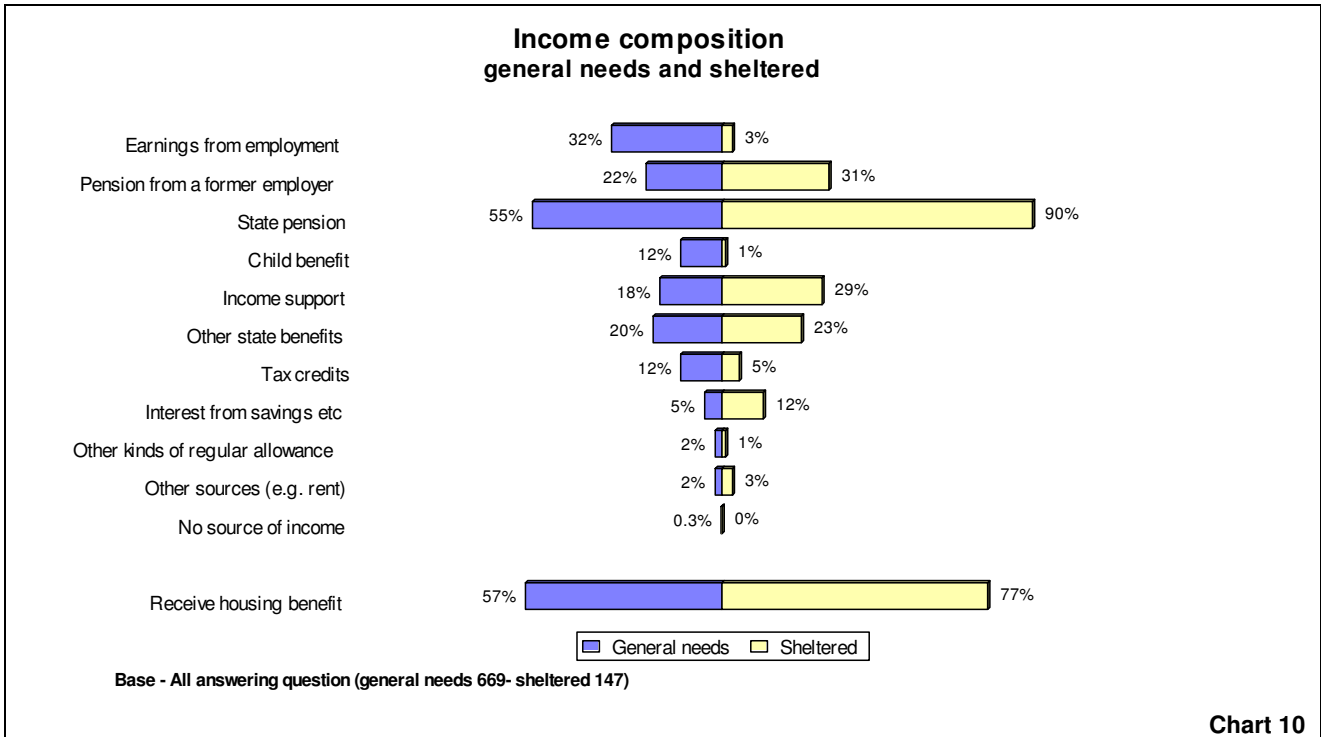


As might be expected given their demographic profile, tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to have a lower average household income than general needs tenants – 81% being under the £200 threshold.



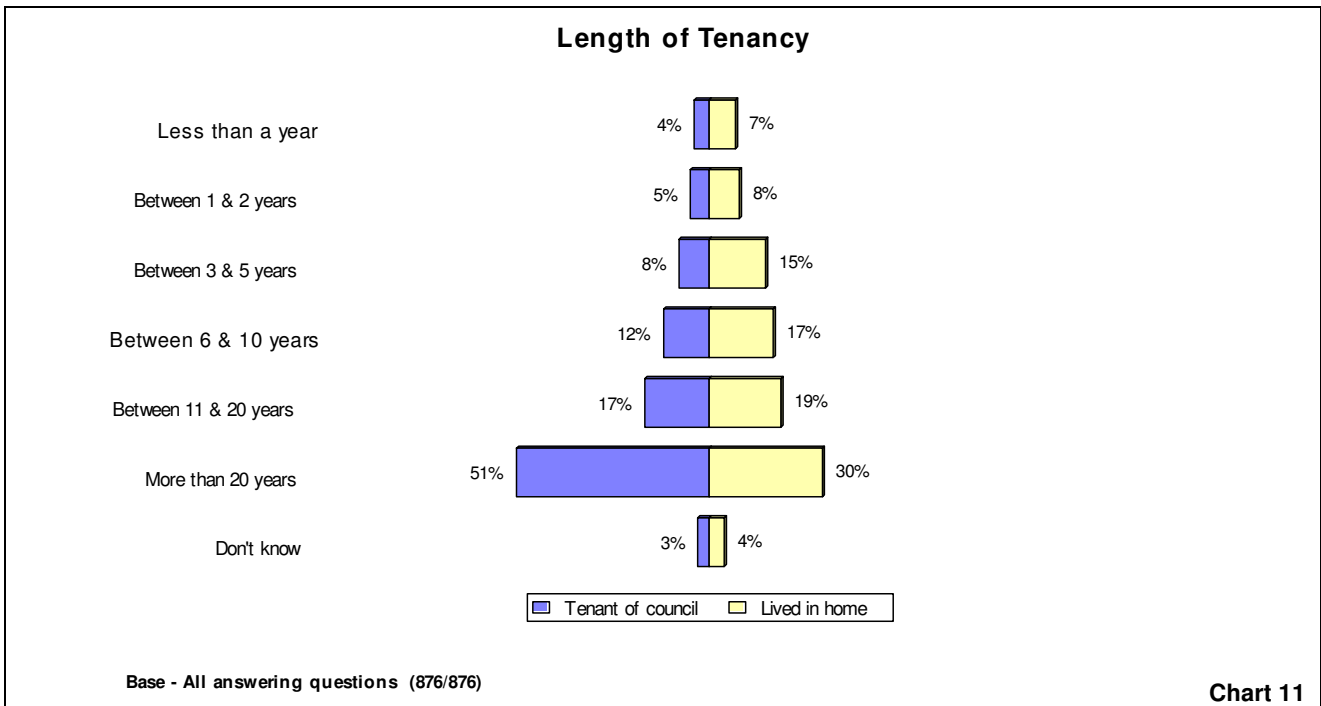
As shown on the chart below, there is a marked difference between general needs tenants and tenants in sheltered/supported housing in terms of the make-up of their household income, with the majority of the sheltered tenants reliant on pensions and benefits.

More than three quarters of tenants in sheltered/supported housing receive housing benefit compared with just over half of general needs tenants.

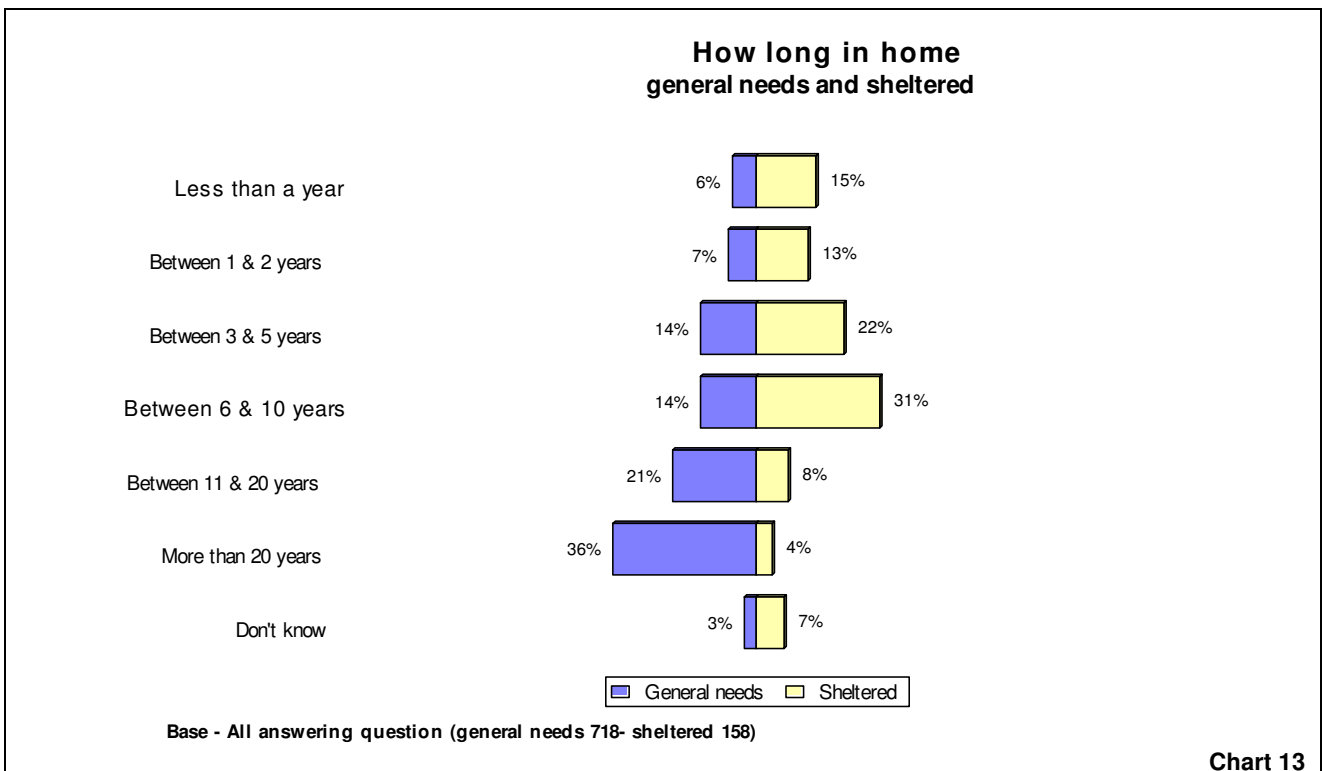
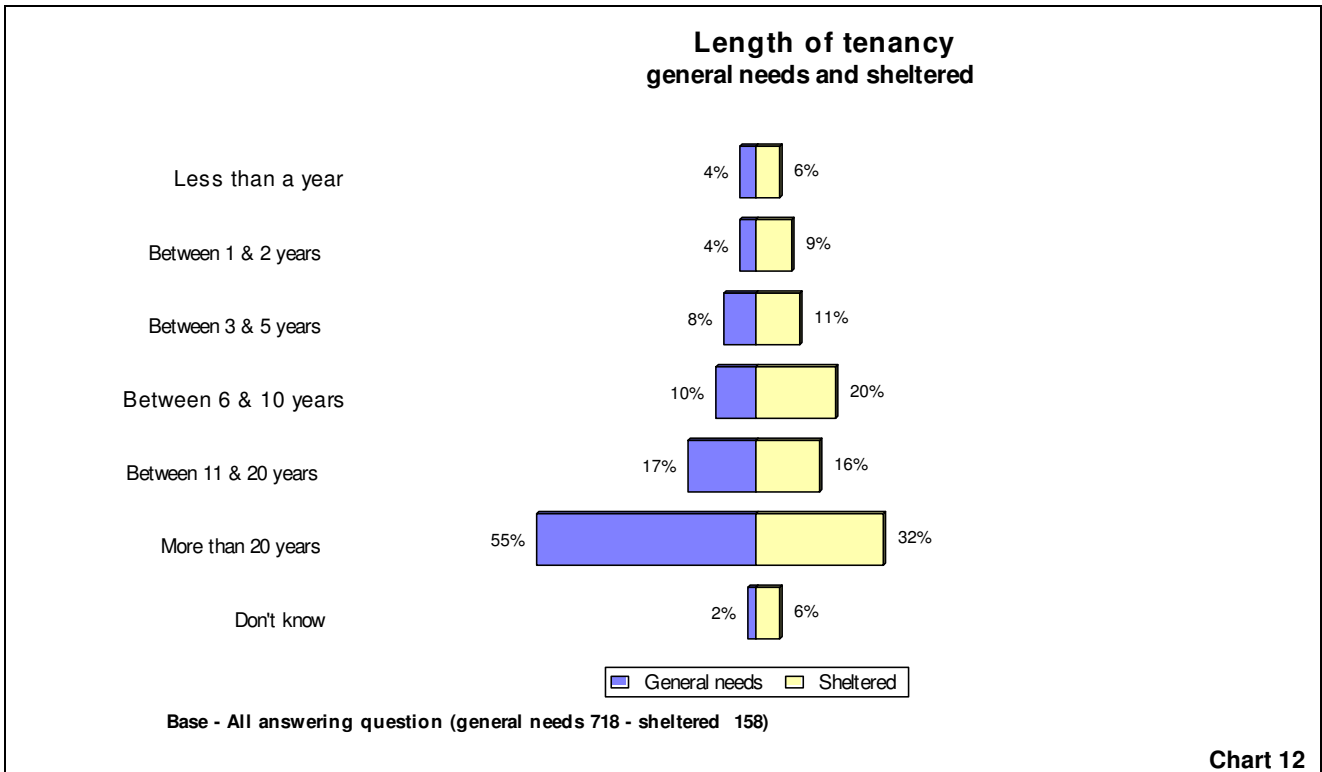


Length of tenancy

Overall, 51% have been a tenant of the council for more than 20 years, with 30% having been in their particular accommodation for that length of time.



The two charts below show that tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to have been tenants of the council for a shorter time than general needs tenants, and to have lived in the current home for a shorter period.

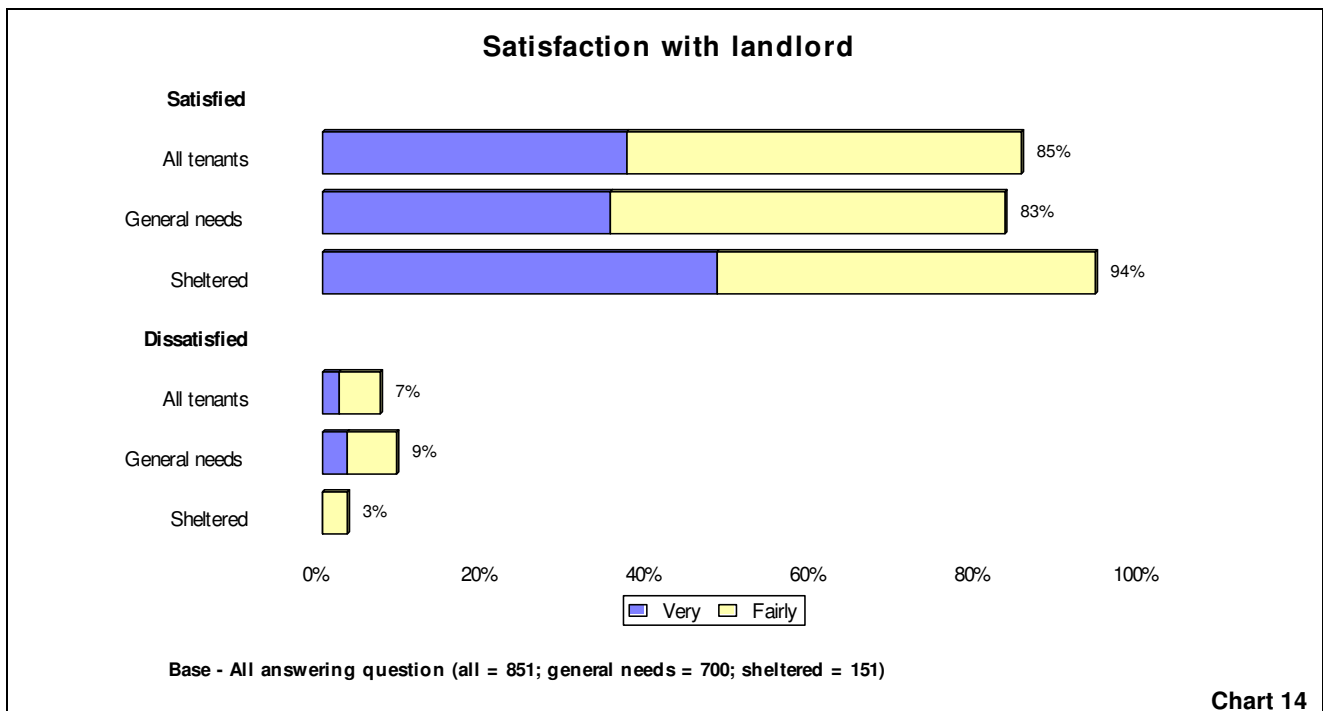


Satisfaction with landlord (NI 160)

The majority of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by the council as their landlord (85%). Only 7% expressed any degree of dissatisfaction, with the remainder opting for the neutral 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' position on the questionnaire.

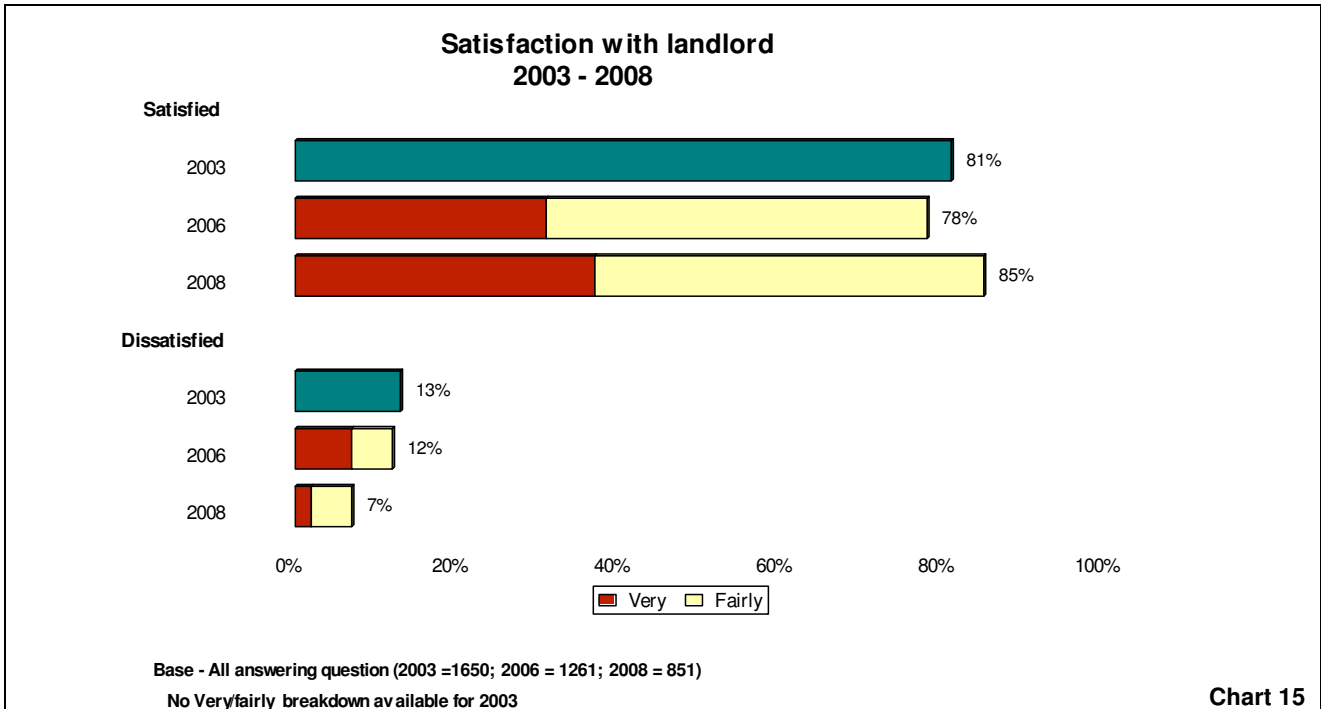
Note that this is the question relating to the New National Indicator NI 160, and will be reported to the Audit Commission based on general needs tenants only. As shown below this will produce a satisfaction level of 83%.

Sheltered housing tenants show a significantly higher level of overall satisfaction, with 48% saying they are very satisfied (compared with 35% of general needs tenants) and a further 46% fairly satisfied (48% for general needs).



The chart below compares overall satisfaction with landlord services between 2003 and 2008 (note that data available for 2003 did not show a breakdown between very satisfied and fairly satisfied).

The latest survey show a statistically significant increase in overall satisfaction since the 2006 survey – up from 78% to 85%.

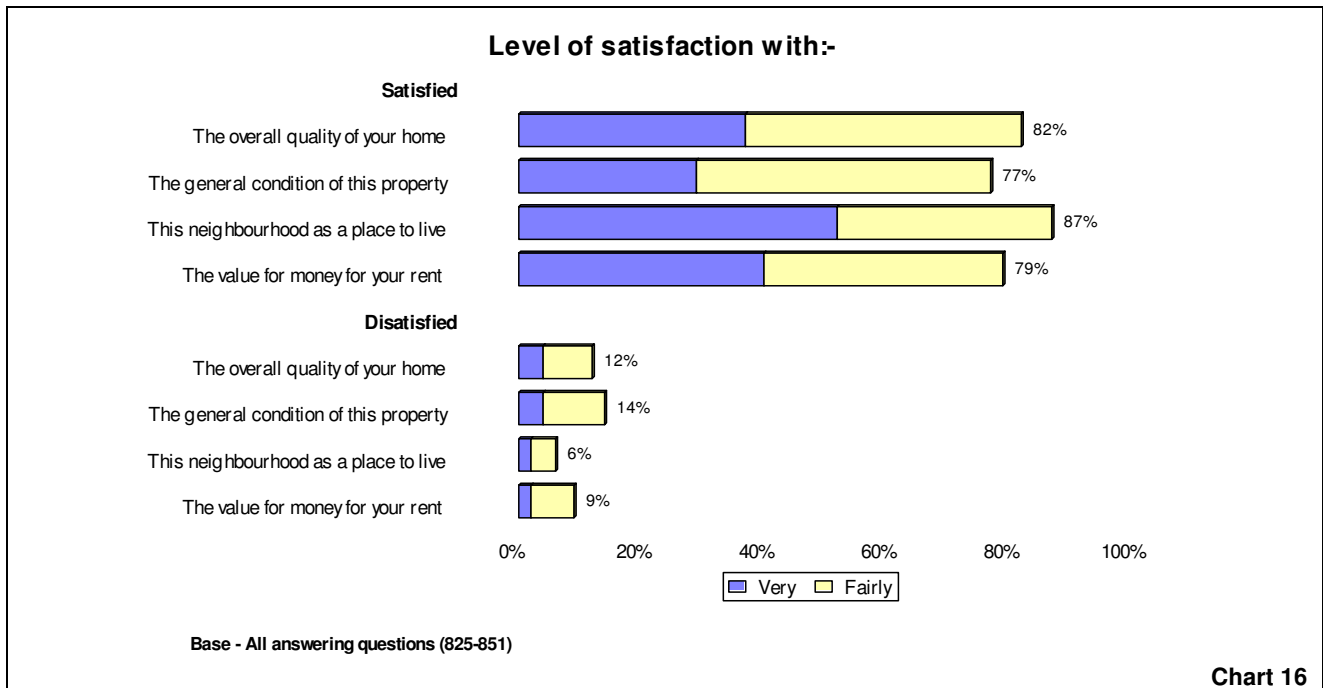


Satisfaction with housing and neighbourhood

Tenants were asked to say how satisfied they are with a number of aspects of their home and neighbourhood.

As shown on the chart below satisfaction levels are high, with 82% satisfied with the overall quality of their home, 77% with the general condition of the property, and 79% with the value for money for their rent. Overall, 87% say they are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

Dissatisfaction levels ranged from 6% for the neighbourhood to 14% for the condition of the property (the remainder in each case responding neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

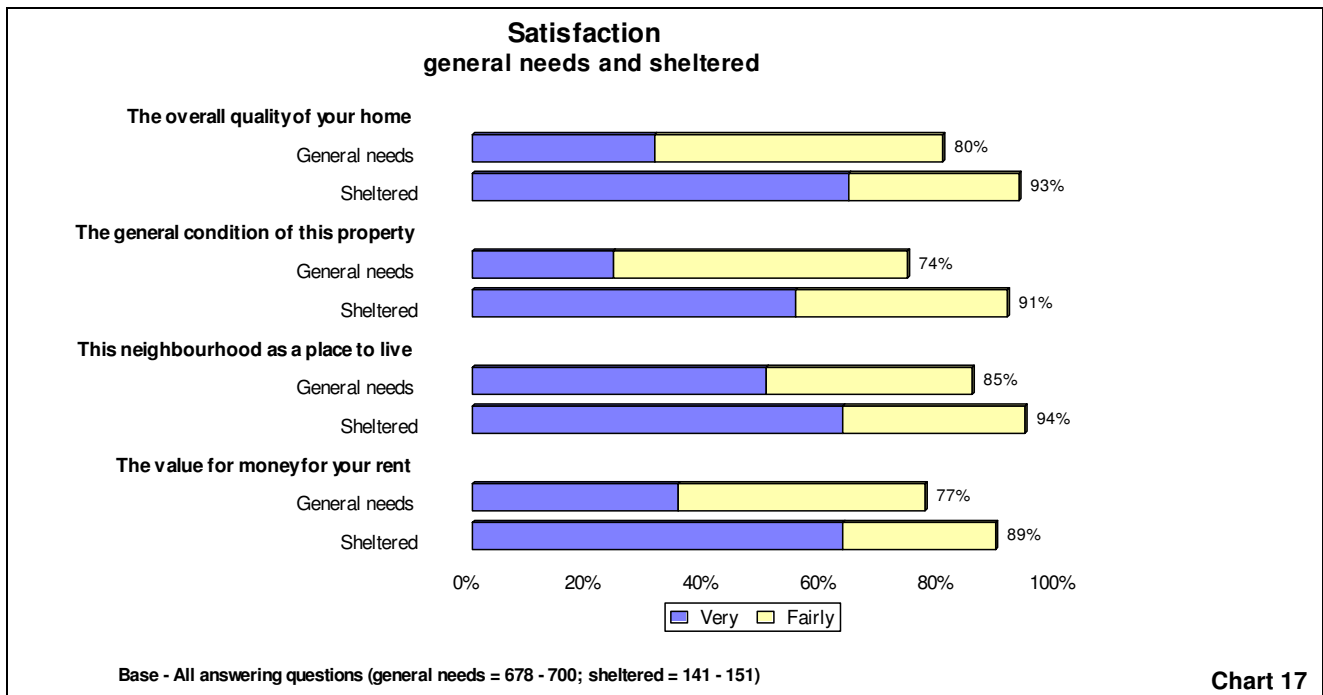


While questions relating to the condition and quality of accommodation and value for money featured on previous questionnaires, the wording of the questions was different and so data is not directly comparable.

On the 2006 survey 88% of tenants said they were satisfied with their accommodation, and 81% described their home as being in good condition; 80% rated the rent they pay as offering value for money.

In 2006 91% of tenants said that they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (which was a stand alone question on the previous questionnaire).

The chart below shows a big (statistically significant) difference in response to these questions between general needs tenants and those in sheltered/supported housing. Where the proportion of general needs tenants responding 'very satisfied' ranged from 24% to 50%, for tenants in sheltered/supported housing the range was 55% to 64%.



Satisfaction with services

Tenants were asked to say how satisfied they are with a number of aspects of service provided by the council as their landlord.

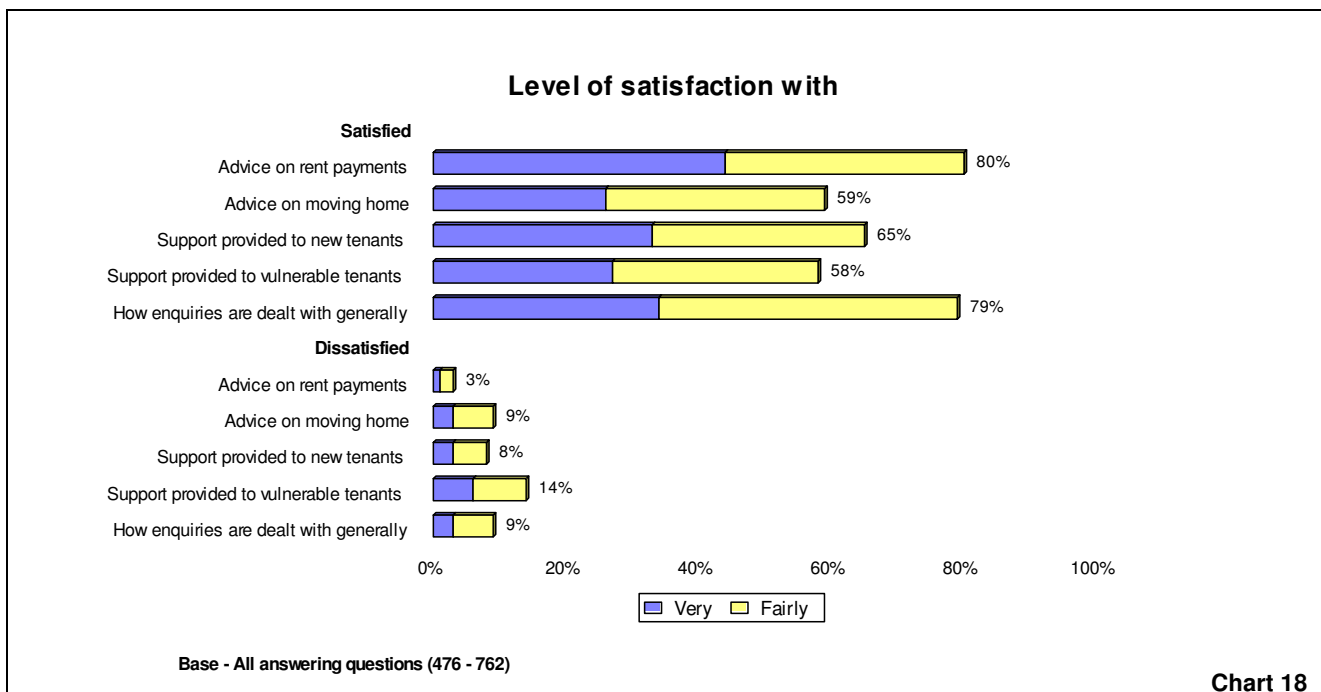
As shown on the chart below, the great majority of those with an opinion are satisfied with the advice available on rent payments (80%), and how enquiries are dealt with (79%). While only 3% expressed dissatisfaction with advice on rent payments, this rose to 9% for how enquiries are dealt with (the remainder falling into the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied category).

While for the remaining three types of service two-thirds or fewer of those who expressed a view said they are satisfied, the majority of the remainder opted for the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position suggesting that they have no view on these issues.

Furthermore, there was a large number of tenants who expressed no view at all on these three issues – i.e. did not answer the question at all, or ticked the no opinion box (around 60% in each case).

If those who responded neither satisfied nor dissatisfied are taken out of the equation on the assumption that they have no opinion on each of the matters, satisfaction levels would rise to the following levels:-

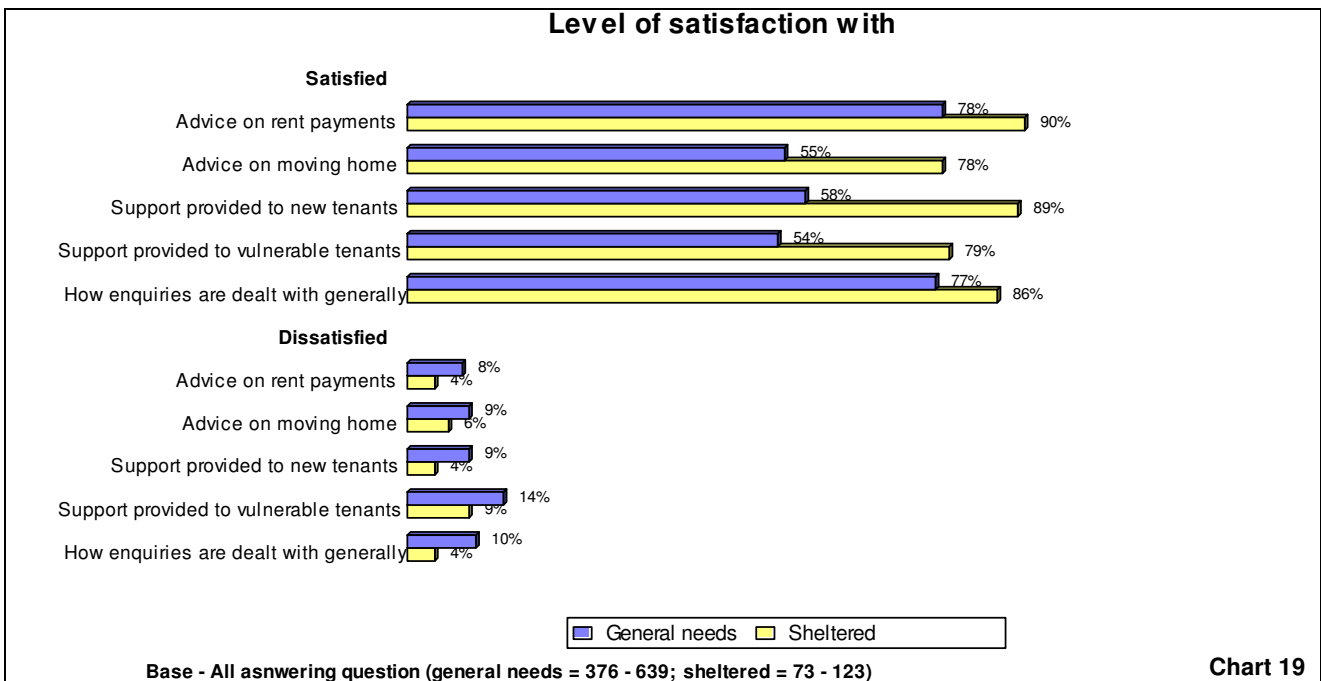
- Advice on rent payments – 97%
- Advice on moving home – 87%
- Support provided to new tenants – 89%
- Support provided to vulnerable tenants – 82%
- How enquiries are dealt with generally – 90%



The chart below shows satisfaction with these services amongst general needs and sheltered housing tenants.

Again, sheltered housing tenants generally show a higher level of satisfaction than general needs tenants (though a lot of the difference is accounted for by a greater proportion of general needs tenants selecting the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position).

Interestingly 14% of the general needs tenants say they are dissatisfied with support provided to vulnerable tenants, though only 9% in sheltered accommodation are dissatisfied.

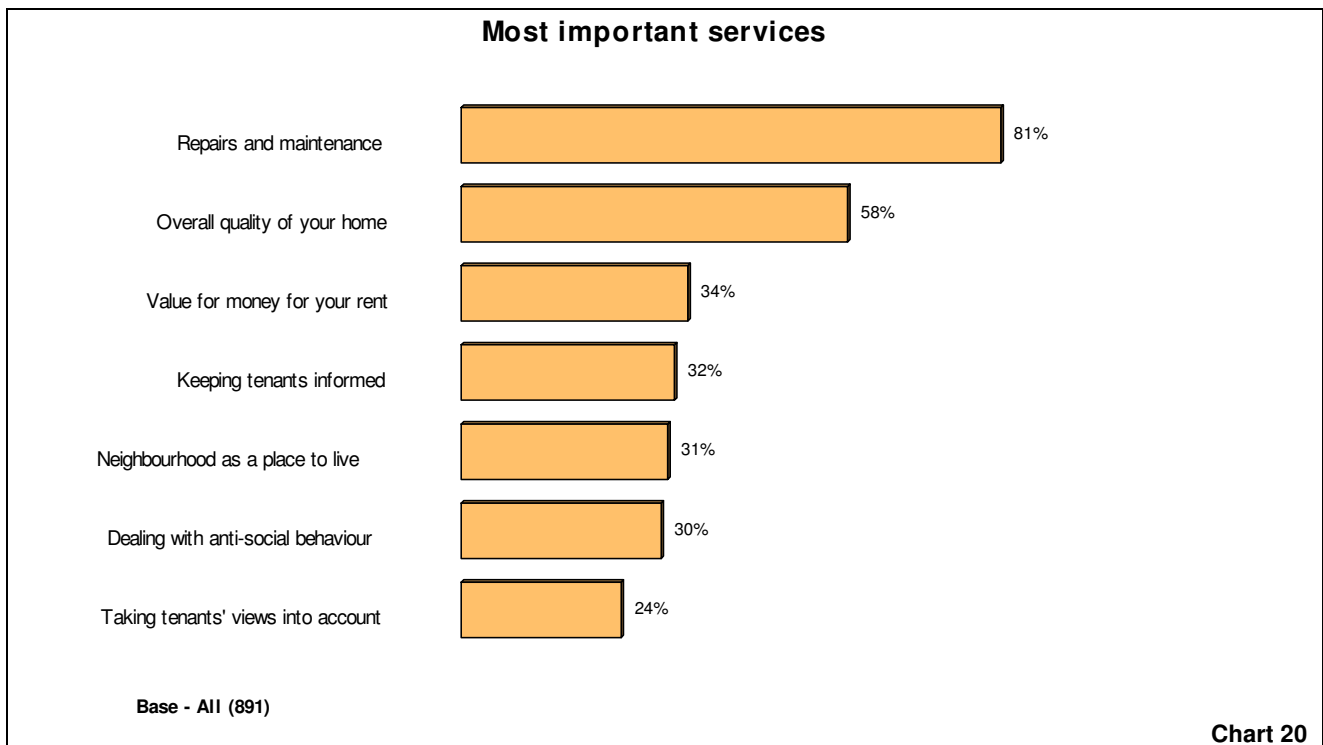


When asked which three services from a choice of six they consider to be most important, repairs and maintenance heads the list by far with 81% of tenants including this in their list of three.

The overall quality of their home comes in second position, though some way behind with 58% mentioning this.

Least important, at the bottom of the list is taking tenants' views into account, which around a quarter of tenants include in their list of three.

The remaining four issues receive relatively equal weight with around a third of tenants selecting each.



Although this question has been asked on previous surveys, the factors in the list have been changed on the latest survey and so data is not comparable. Nevertheless, repairs and maintenance also featured at the top of list on the 2006 survey.

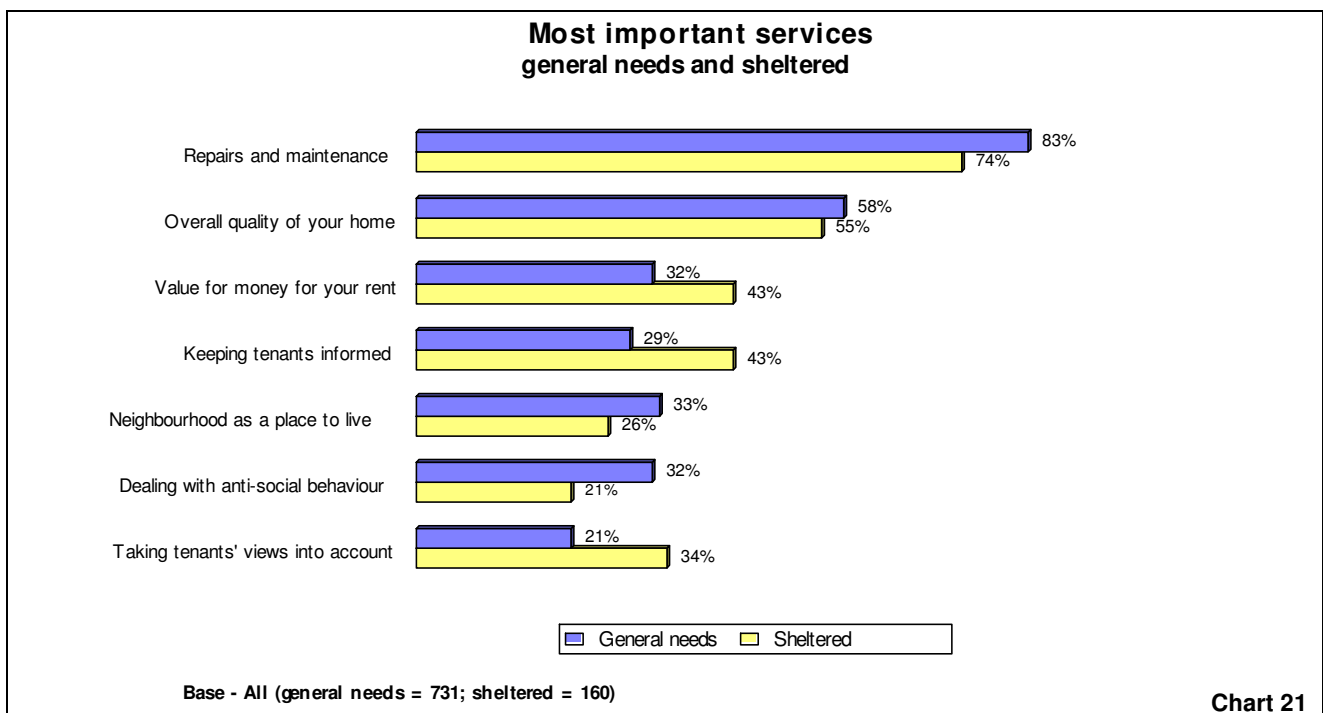
The chart below highlights one or two differences in priorities between general needs tenants and tenants in sheltered/supported housing.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour appears to be more of a concern to general needs tenants than sheltered housing tenants – 32% of the former compared with 21% of the latter including it in their list of three.

Tenants in sheltered/supported housing, on the other hand are much more likely to see keeping tenants informed as a priority (43% compared with 29% of general needs tenants), and taking tenants views into account (34% vs 21%).

Value for money also appears to be of greater concern amongst sheltered housing tenants, with 43% including it in their list compared with 32% of general needs tenants.

Note that all the differences discussed are statistically significant.



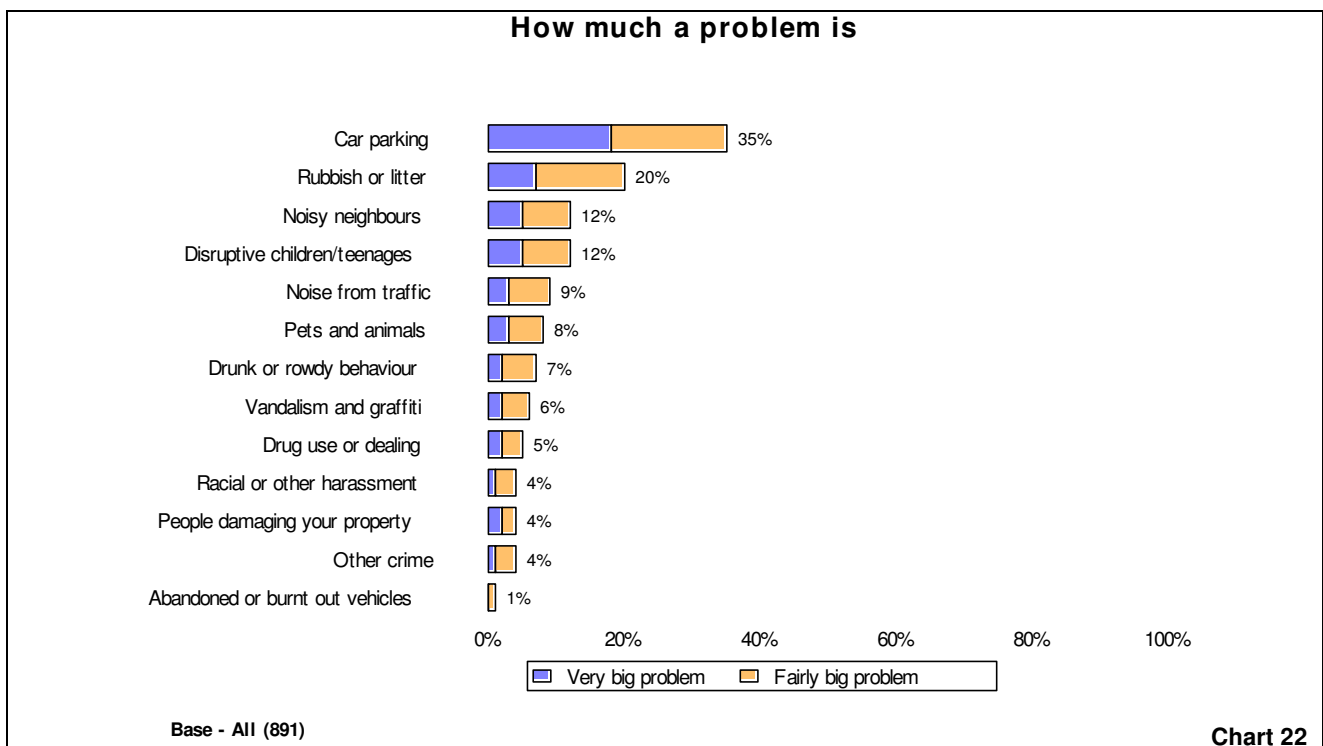
Tenants were presented with a list of potential problems and were asked to say to what extent each is a problem in their area. The chart below shows the proportion citing each of these as either a very big problem or a fairly big problem.

As shown, car parking heads the list, with 18% citing this as a very big problem and a further 17% as a fairly big problem.

Rubbish and litter comes in second position, though some way behind, with 20% of tenants seeing this as a big problem in their neighbourhood.

Only two other issues are cited as being either a very big problem or a fairly big problem by more than 10% of tenants – noisy neighbours (12%) and disruptive children/teenagers (12%).

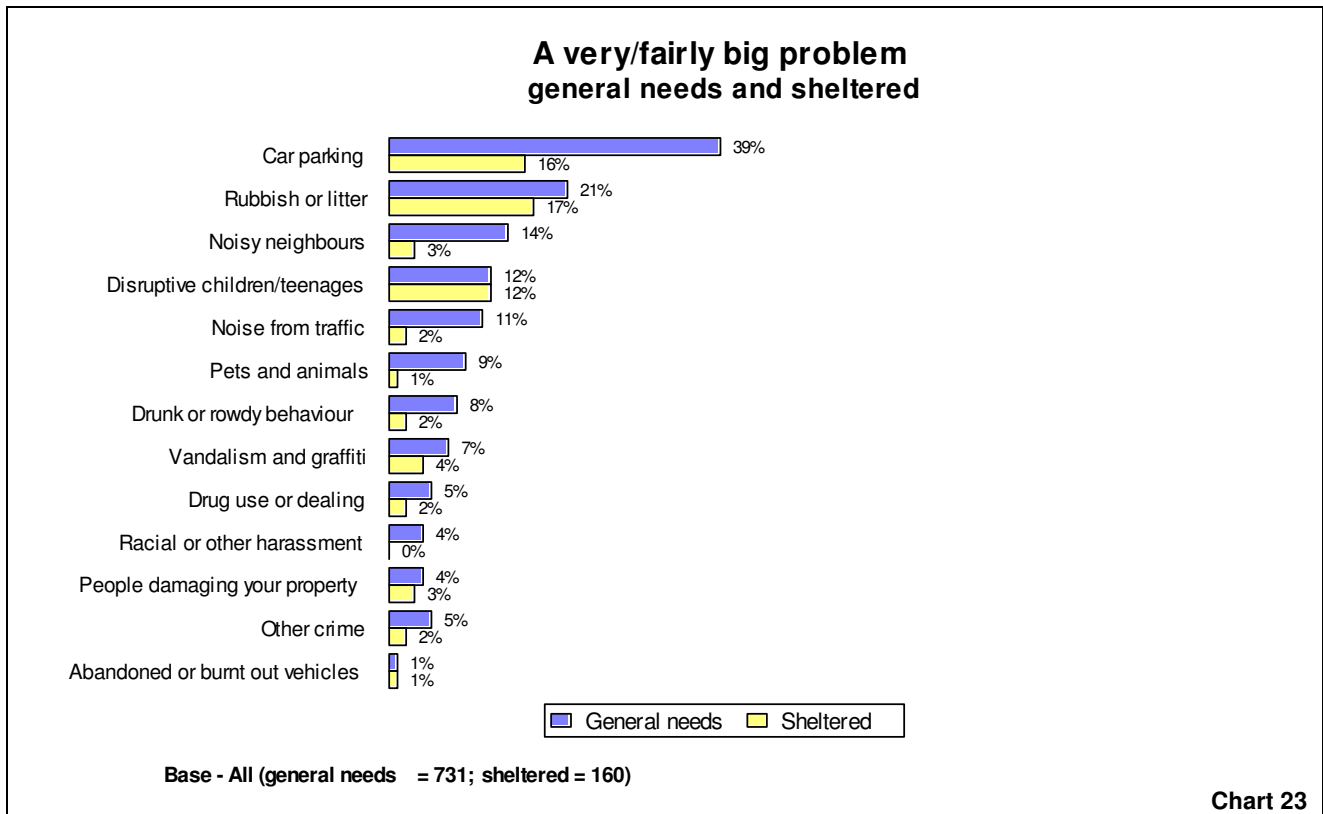
For all the other issues listed 9% or fewer see these as a big problem in their neighbourhood.



On the 2006 questionnaire, while a similar list of anti-social behaviour issues was listed, the question was worded differently with tenants being asked “Do you think that each of these is a serious problem, a slight problem or not a problem in your neighbourhood?”

The different questions yielded very different responses, and so data is not comparable.

As shown on the chart below, tenants living in general needs properties are rather more likely to see these issues as problems in their neighbourhood than are sheltered housing tenants.



Contact with the council

Overall, 70% of tenants claimed to have contacted the council as their landlord in the last twelve months.

In the majority of cases the contact was made by telephone (80%) and the subject was repairs (76%).

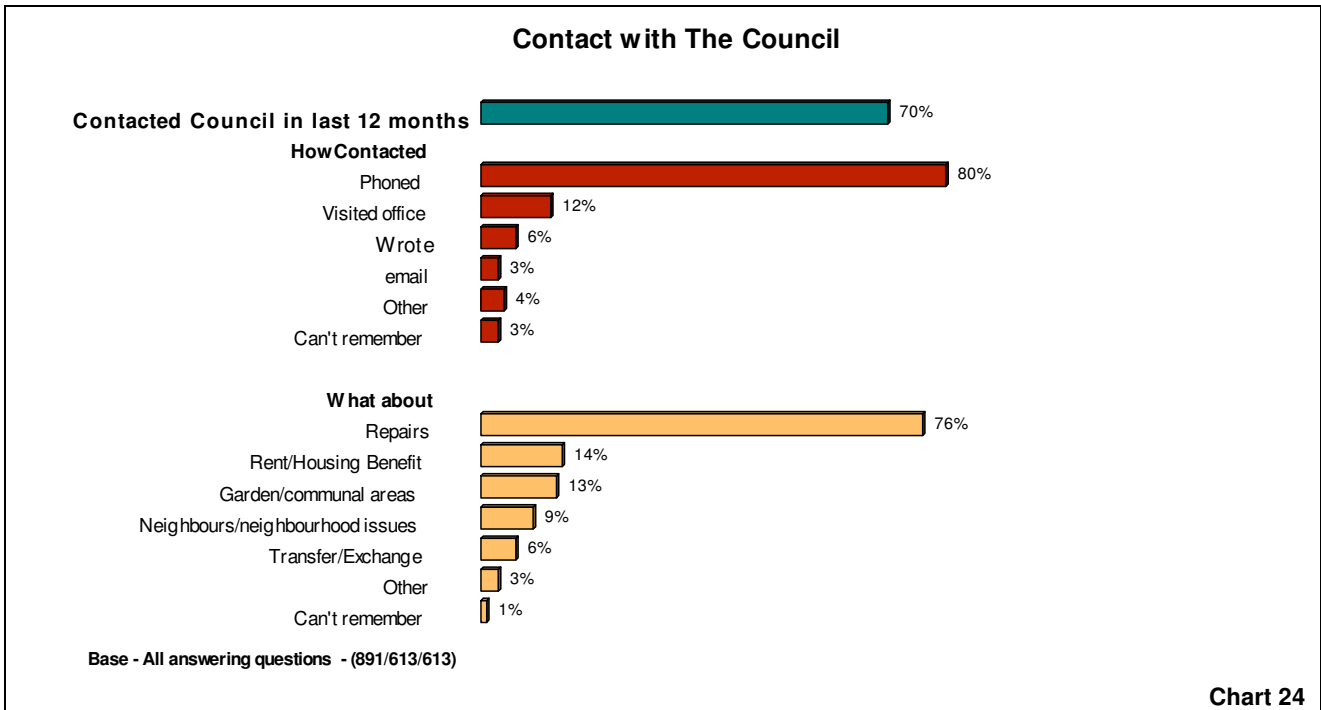


Chart 24

In the majority of cases those who contacted the council were positive about their experience; the majority claimed that it was easy to get hold of the right person (77%), that staff were helpful (88%), and were able to deal with their problem (78%).

Fewer, however were satisfied with the final outcome (69%), with 22% being dissatisfied (the remainder opting for the neutral neither position).

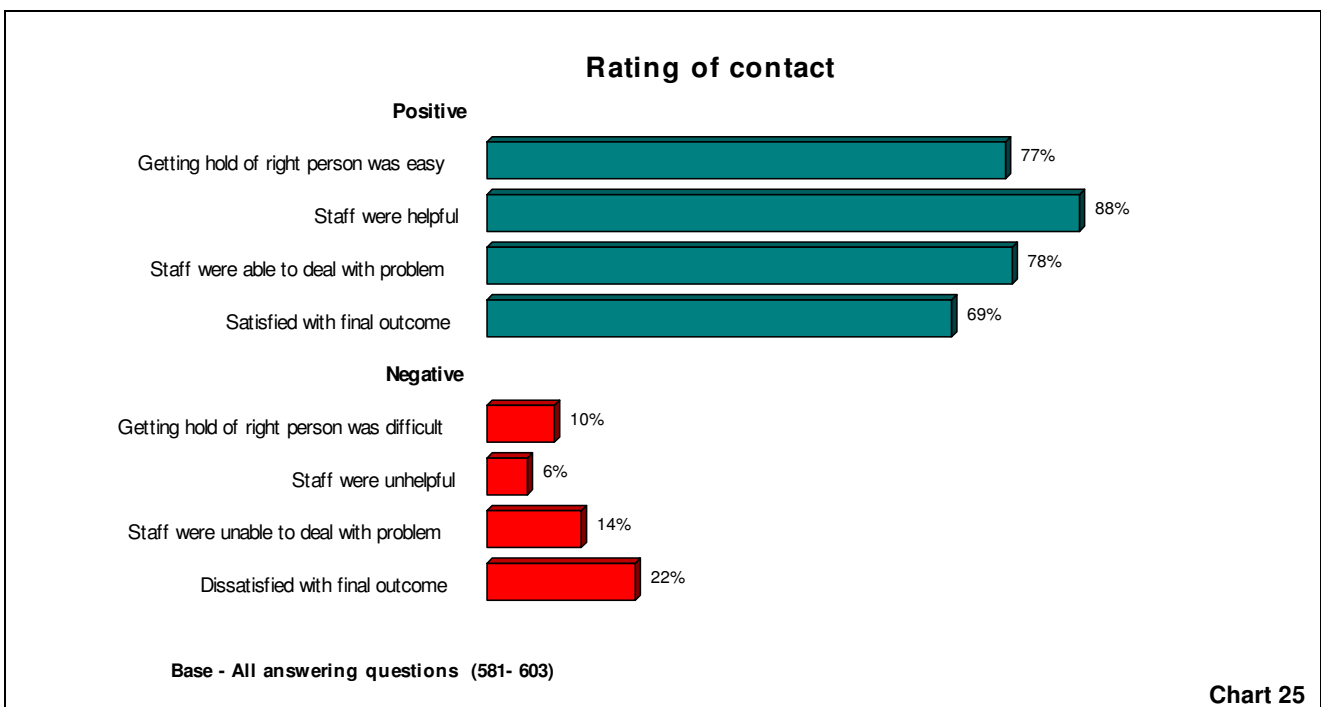
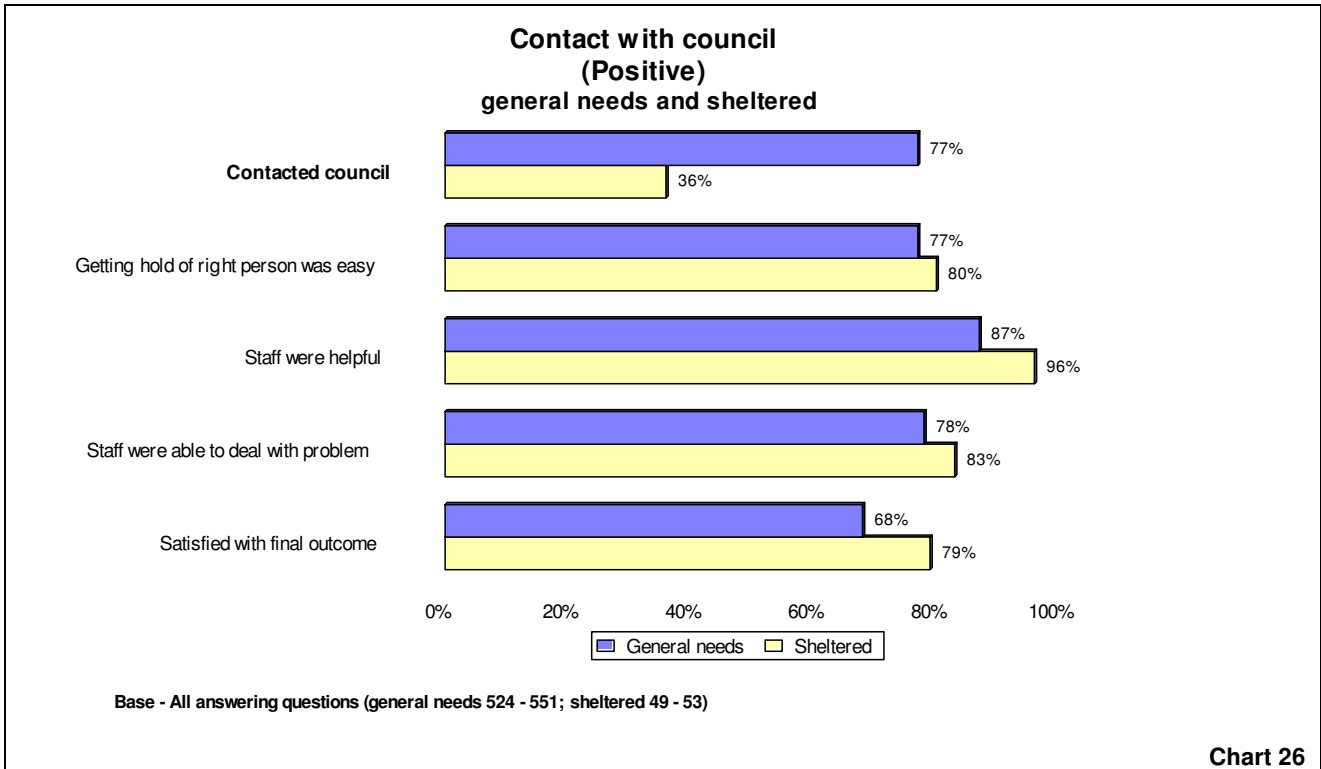


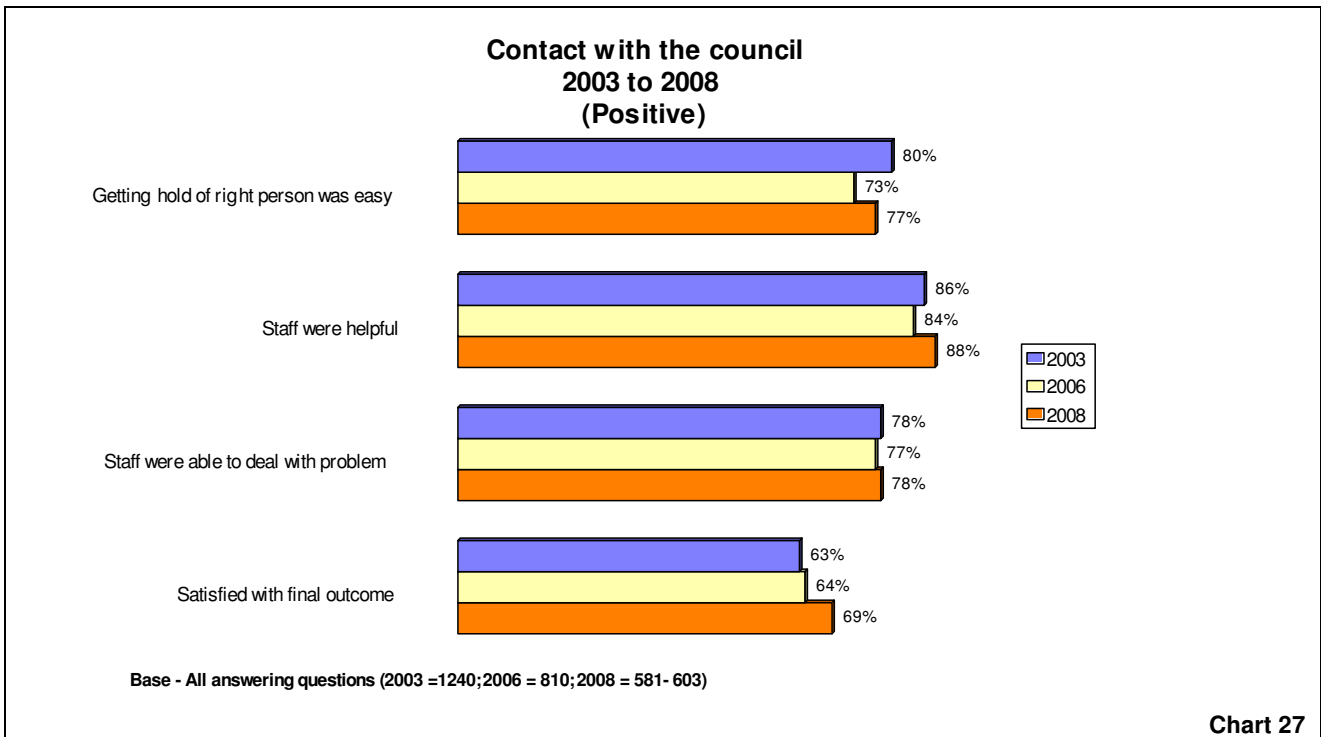
Chart 25

The chart below shows that general needs tenants are much more likely to have contacted the council in the last twelve months (77%) than tenants in sheltered/supported housing (36%).

Again tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to be more positive in their rating of the way the way enquiry was handled than general needs tenants.



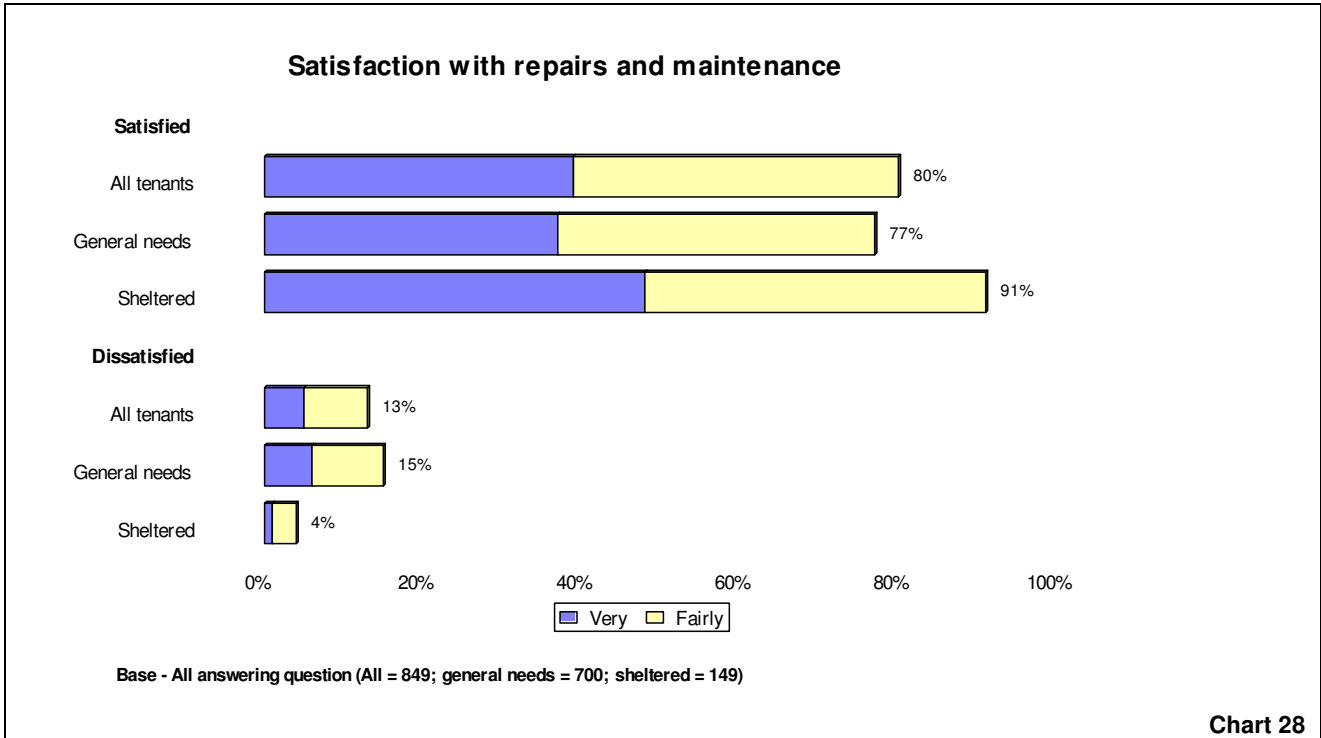
The chart below shows response to these questions in 2003, 2006 and on the latest survey, and reveal a very similar pattern (any differences shown not being statistically significant).



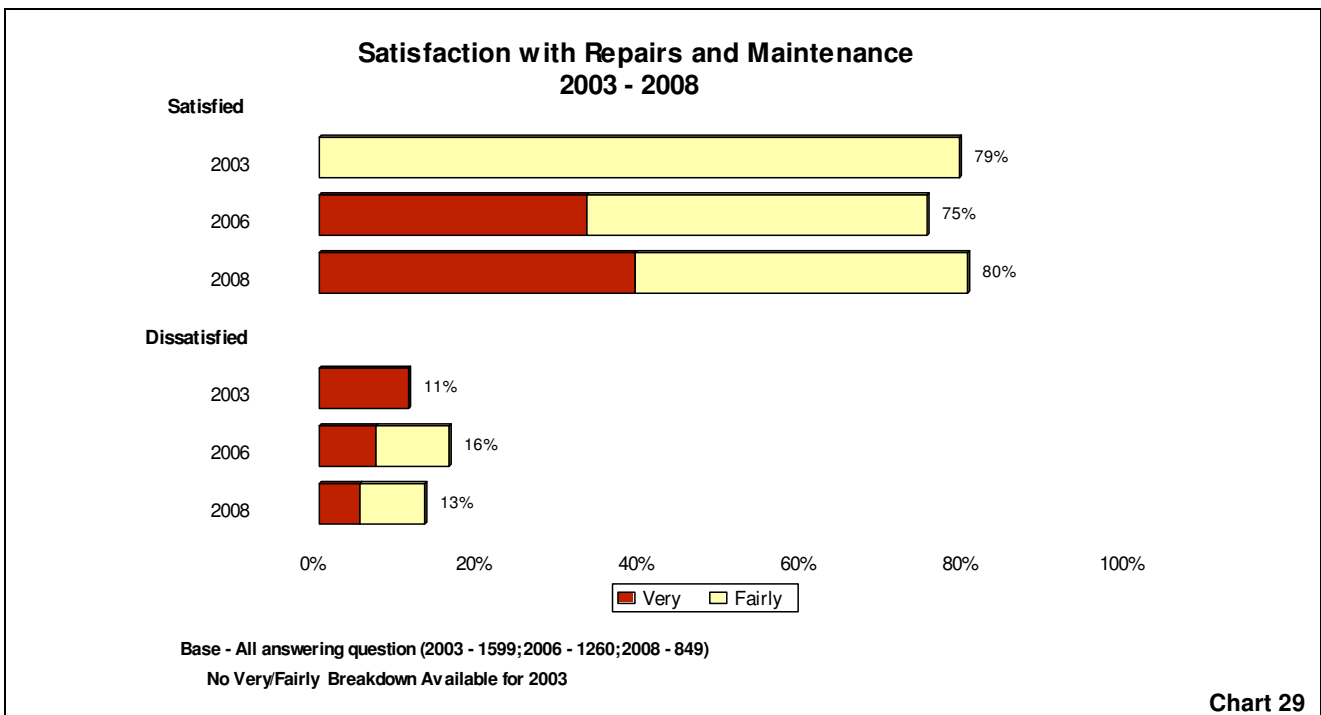
Repairs

Overall attitudes towards the council’s repair service are reflected in the chart below, which shows that 80% of all tenants are satisfied with the way the council deals with repairs and maintenance - 39% being very satisfied.

Again, tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to be more positive in their ratings, with 91% rating the service positively compared with 77% of general needs tenants.



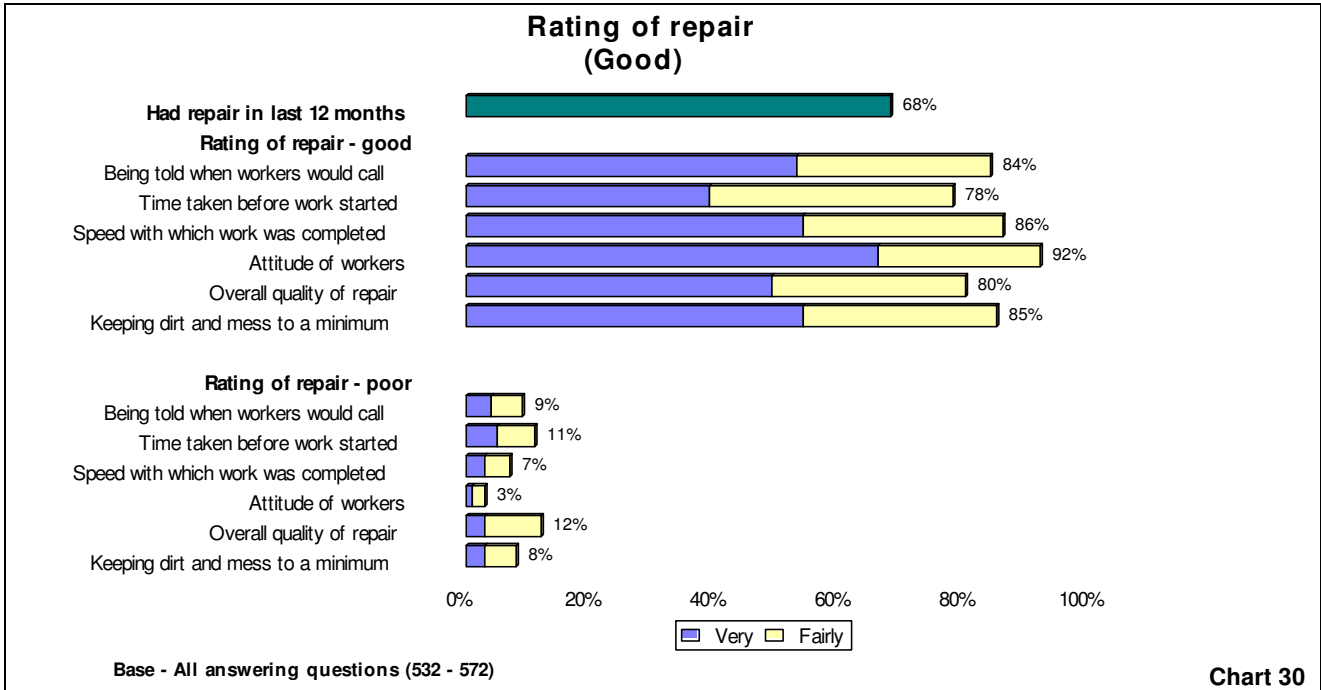
The chart below shows a slight dip in satisfaction between 2003 and 2006 (down from 79% to 75%), with the position being recovered in 2008 (the differences in each case being statistically significant).



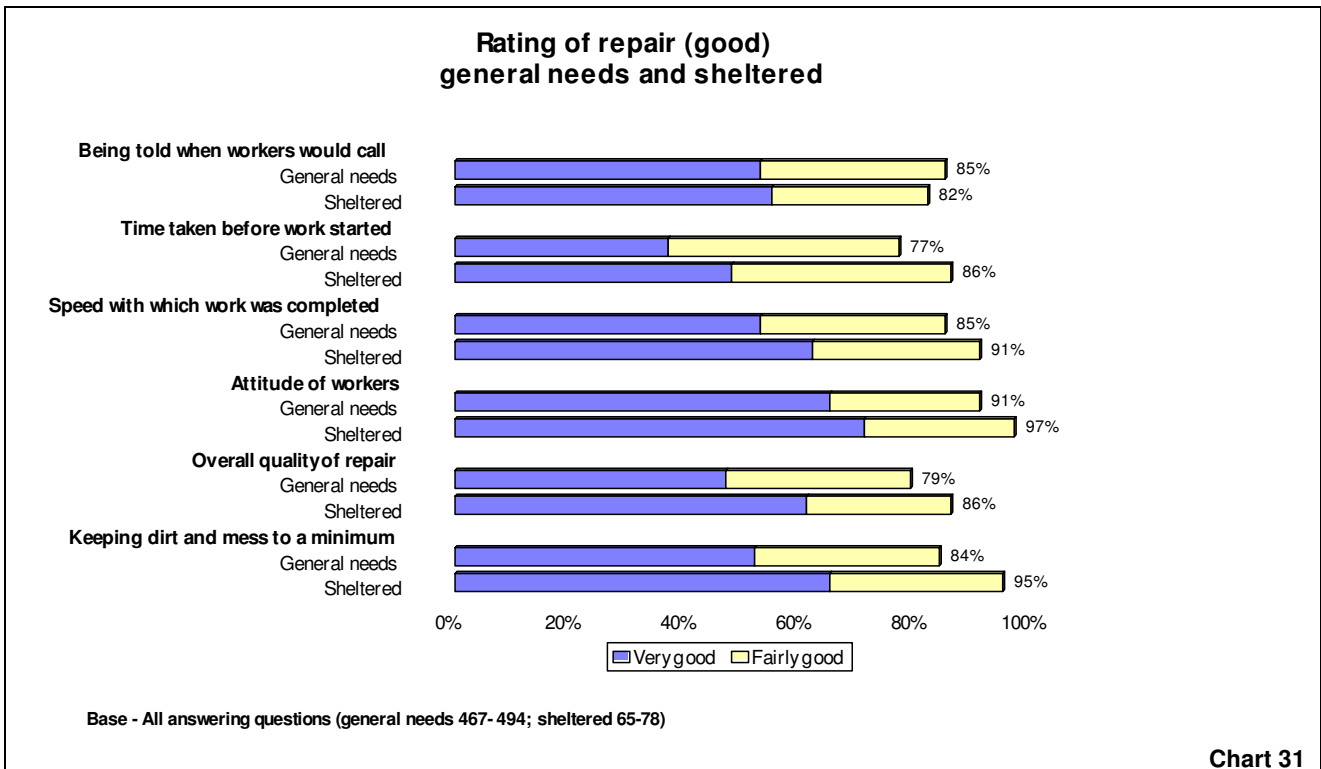
Overall, 68% of tenants have had a repair completed in the last twelve months.

The great majority were happy with all aspects of the repair service, ranging from 78% rating the time taken before work started as either very good or good (9% rating this as poor, and the remainder responding neither/nor) to 92% happy with the attitude of workers.

Overall, 80% rated the quality of the repair as good – 49% rating it as very good.



As has been seen in response to other questions, sheltered housing tenants are generally more positive about their experience than are general needs tenants, with over 90% rating three of the six aspects of service as being very good or good. Furthermore, they are much more inclined towards the very good than are general needs tenants.

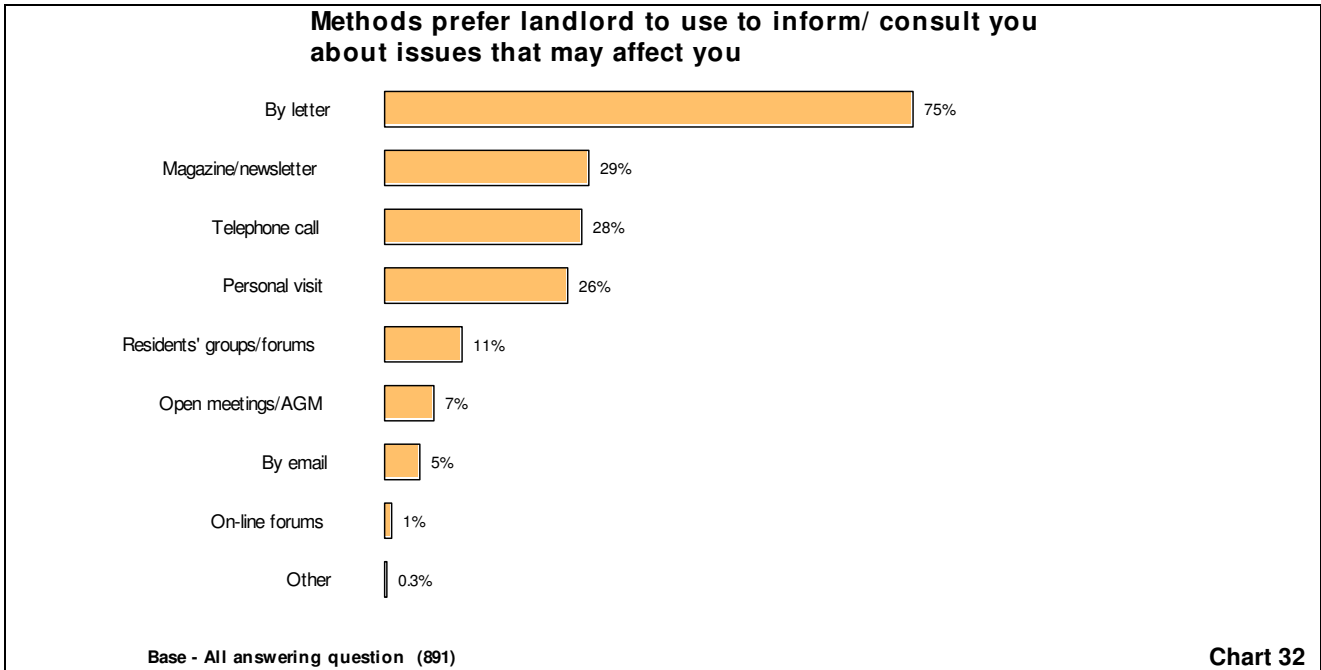


Communications and information

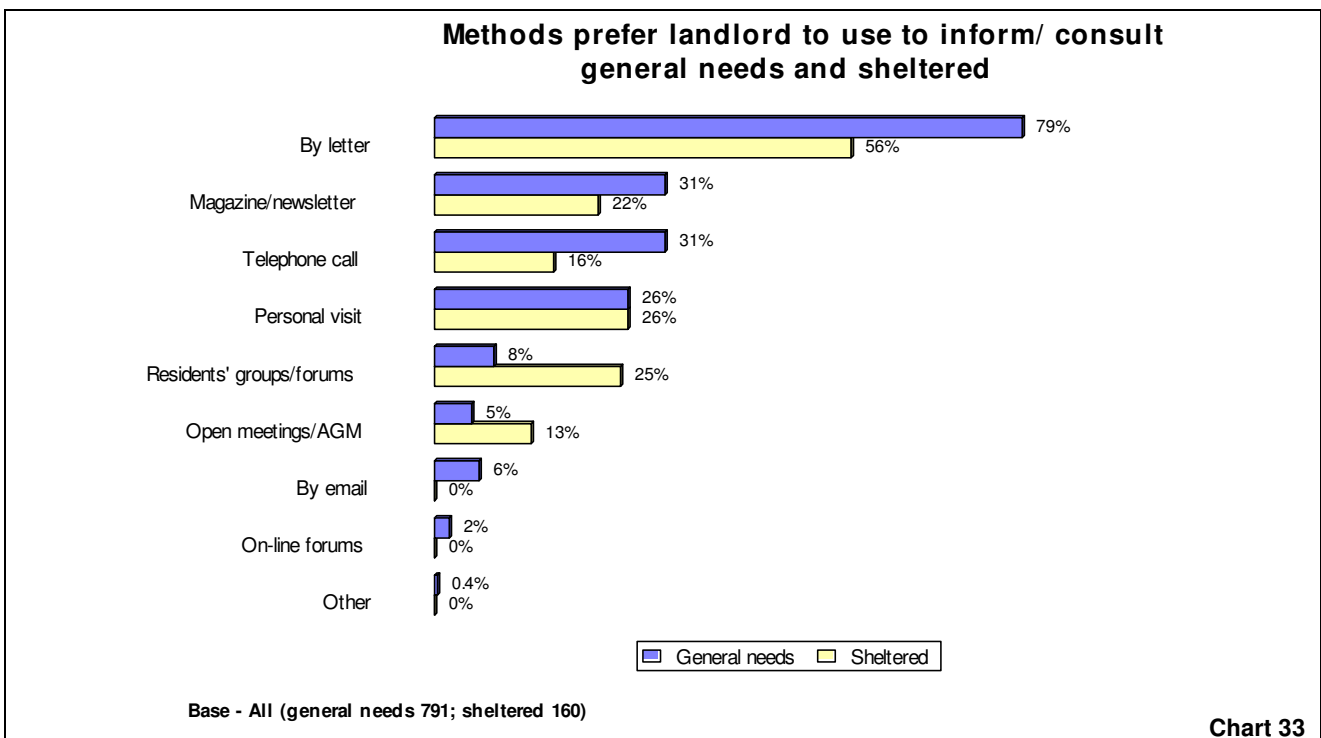
When asked to indicate the methods they would prefer the council to use to inform or consult with tenants about issues that may affect them, the most popular choice would be by letter, which three-quarters of tenants selected.

Just over a quarter would favour telephone contact (28%) or personal visits (26%).

The only other significant approach selected was via a magazine or newsletter which 29% would favour.



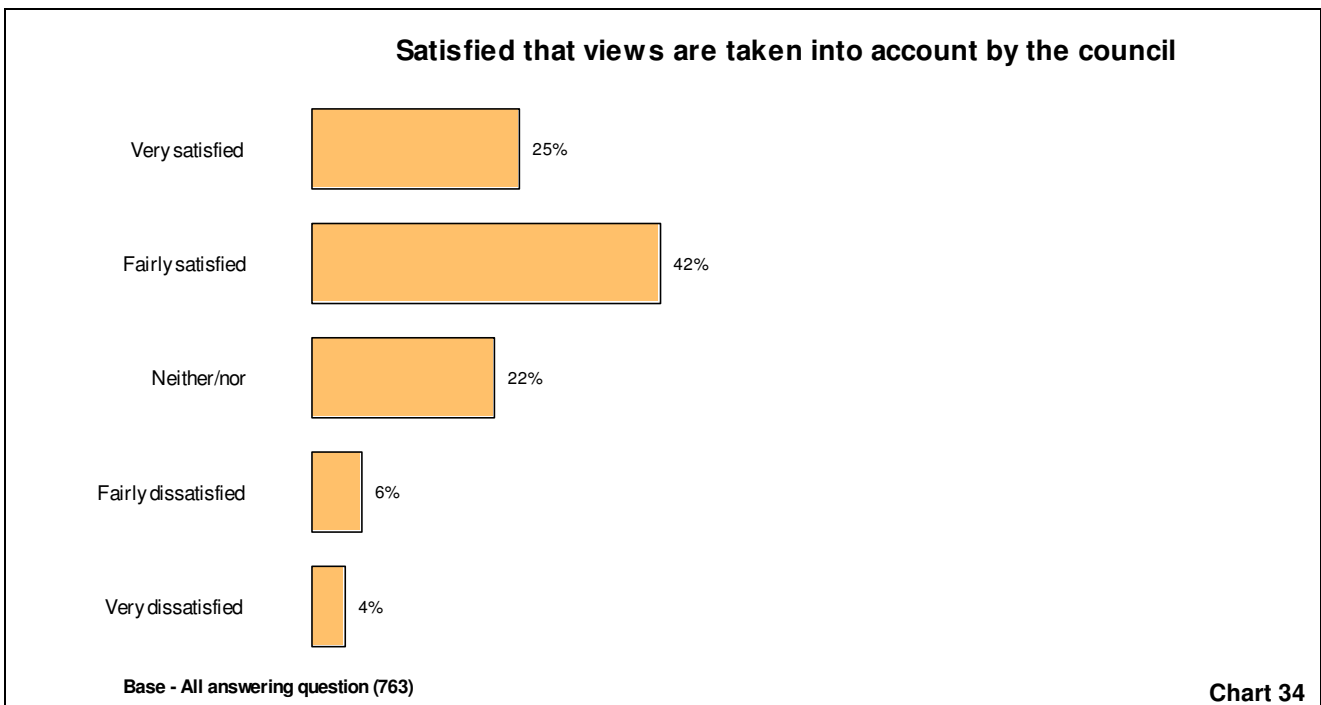
As shown on the chart below there some variation in response between general needs and sheltered housing tenants. Sheltered housing tenants seem to be much more open to involvement with the council in terms of residents' groups (25% compared with 8% of general needs tenants selecting this method), and open meetings (13% vs 5%).



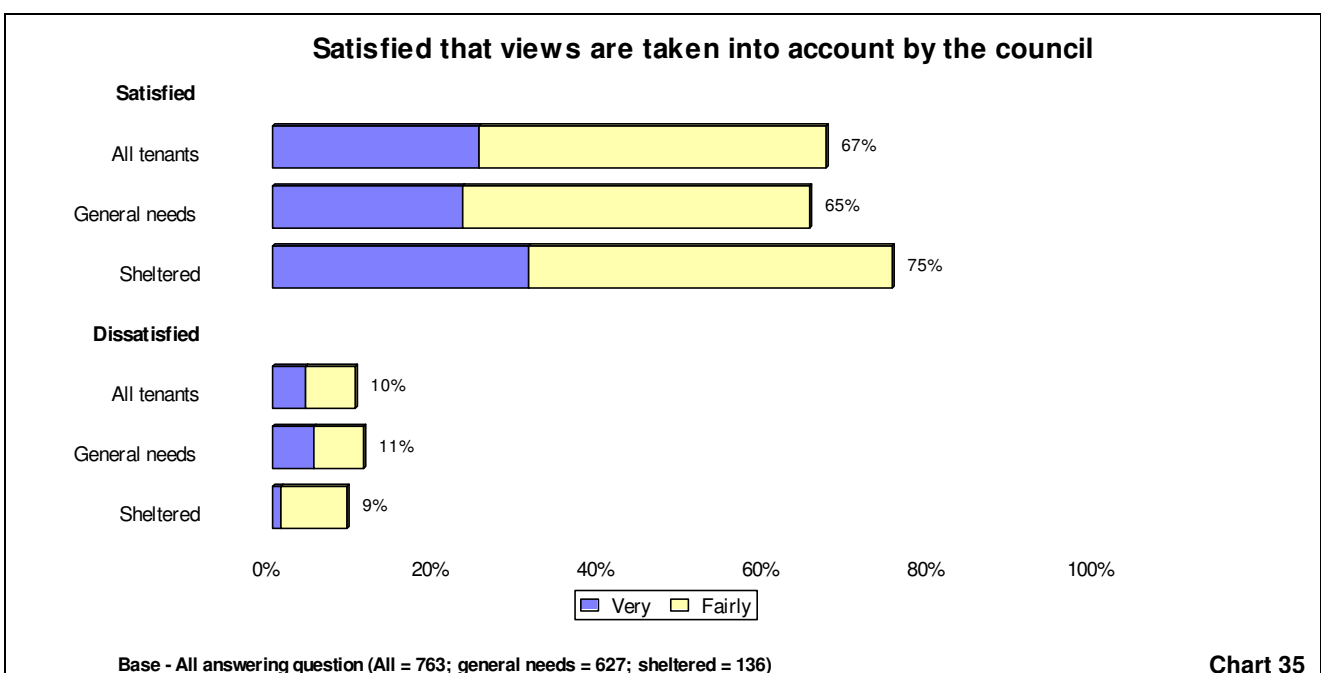
When asked whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied that their views are being taken into account by the council, 25% of those who expressed a view said they are very satisfied and a further 42% fairly satisfied.

Only 10% expressed any degree of dissatisfaction, with a large group not expressing a view one way or the other - 22% of those who answered the question opting for the neutral position.

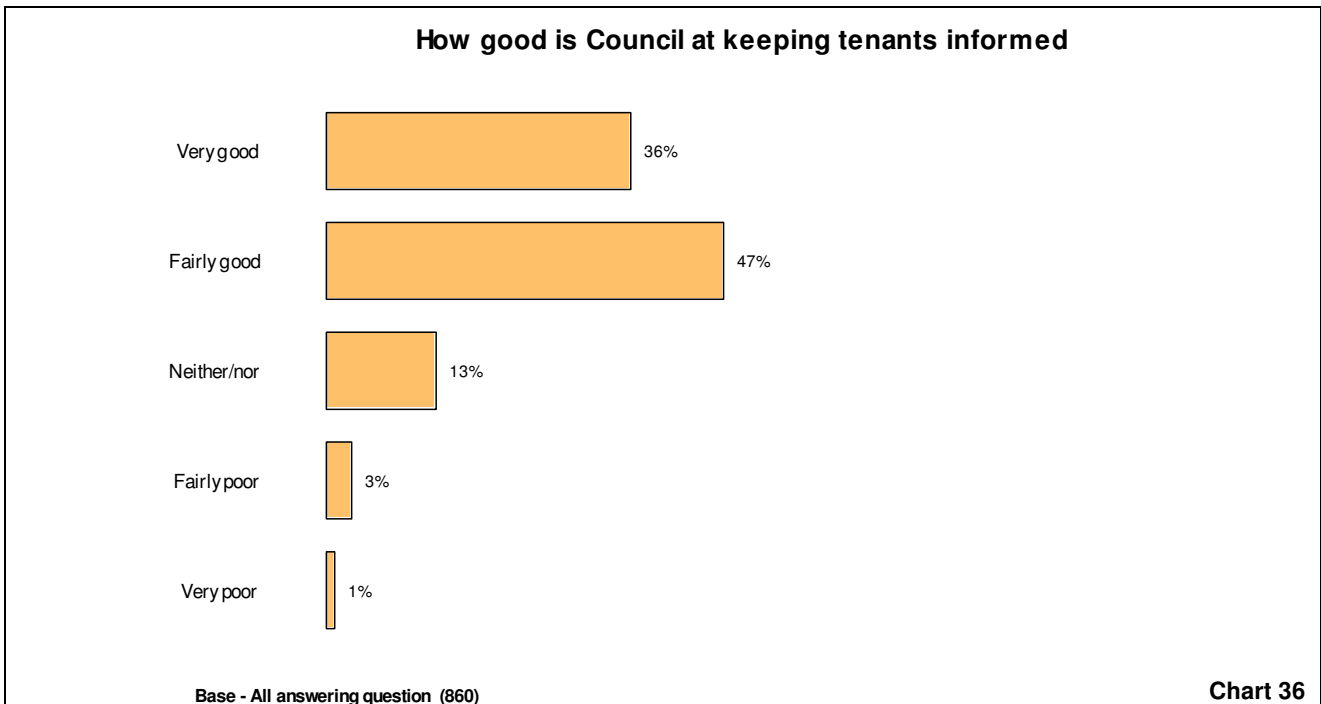
Note that the question relating to taking tenants views into account was completely different on previous surveys; on the 2006 survey 31% of tenants felt that their views were taken into account 'a lot', 50% 'a little' and 18% 'not at all'.



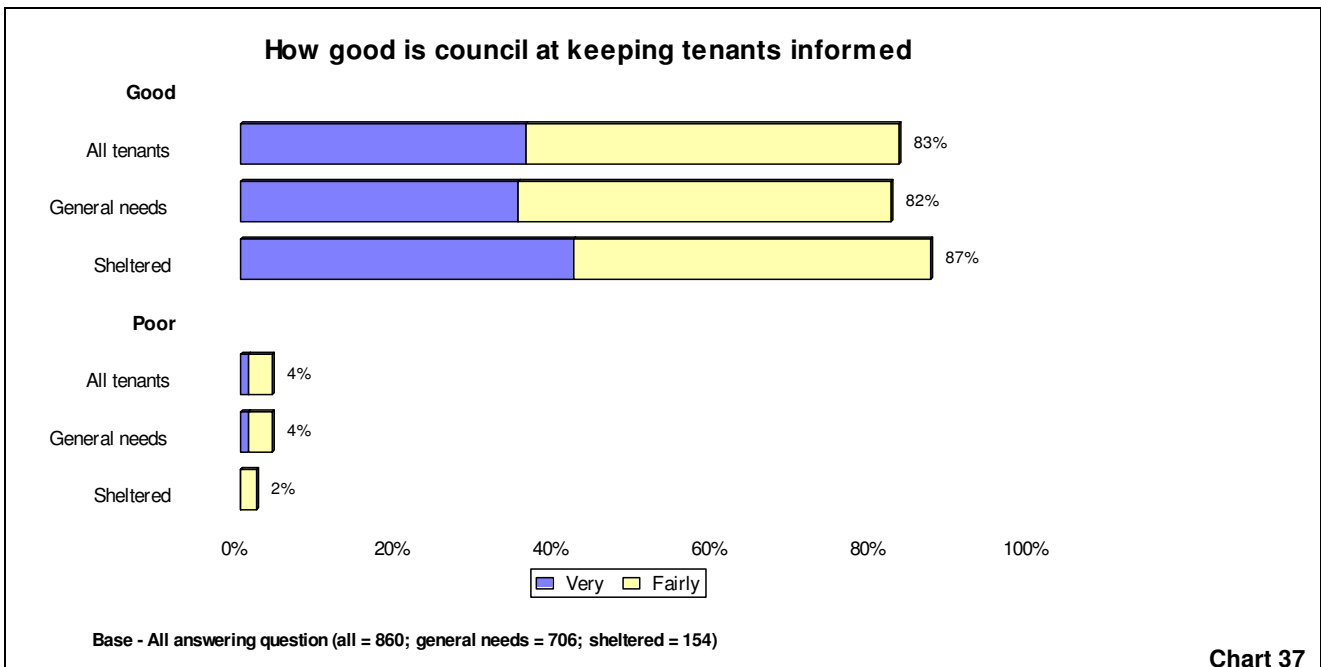
Again, sheltered housing tenants tend to respond more positively than do general needs tenants, with 75% of the former satisfied compared with 65% of the latter (though the difference is not statistically significant).



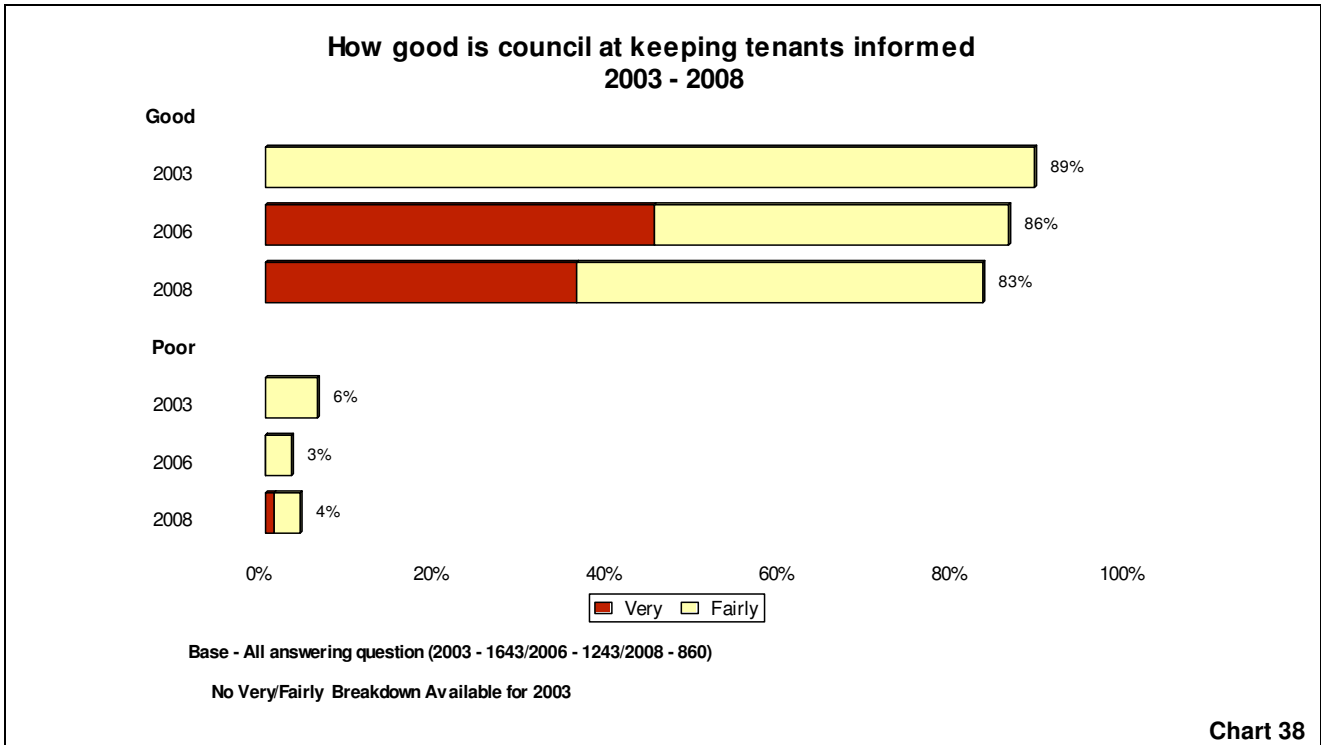
Tenants are generally happy with the level of information they are given, with 83% rating the council as being very good (36%) or fairly good (47%) at keeping them informed about things which might affect them as a tenant.



Again, sheltered housing tenants tend to be more positive, with 87% giving a rating of very good or good compared with 79% of general needs tenants (though again the difference is not statistically significant).

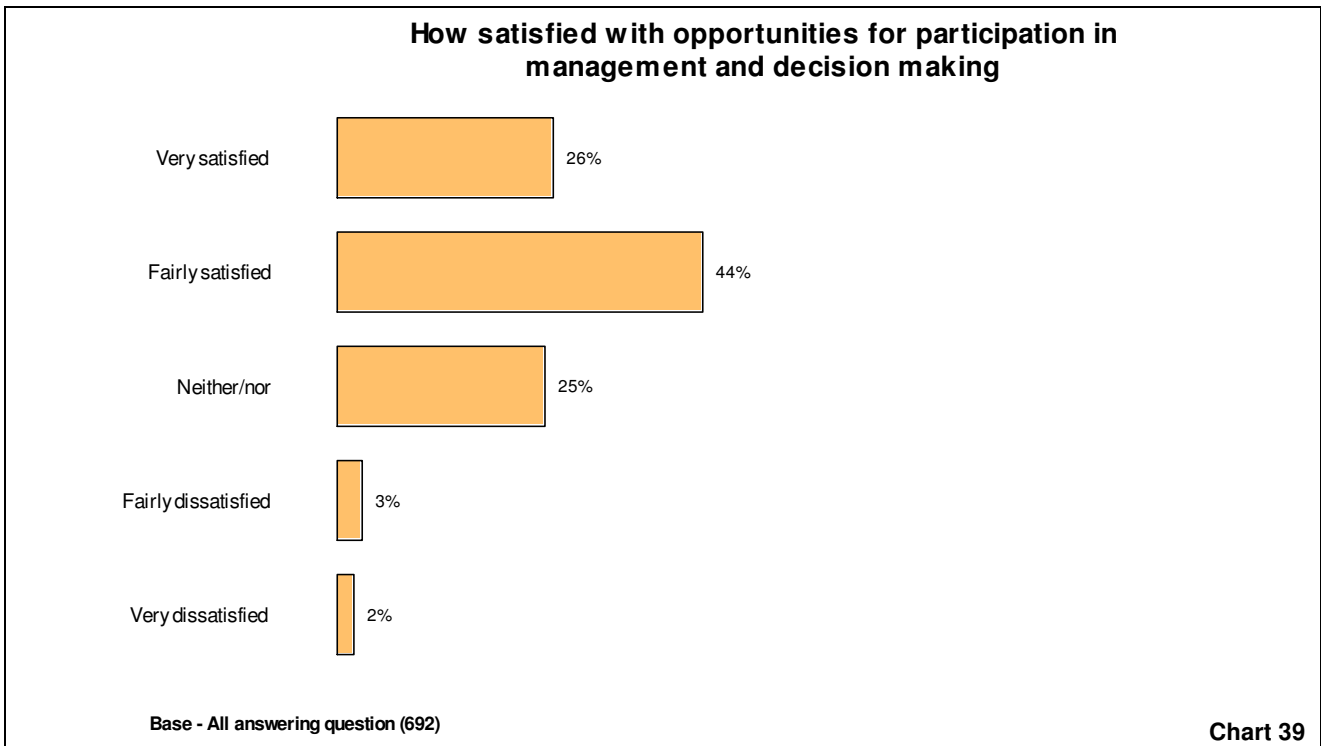


As shown on the chart below there was a steady decline between 2003 and 2008 on this issue, with the proportion rating the council as good at keeping tenants informed falling from 89% to 83% (a statistically significant difference). Note though that the difference is wholly accounted for by an increase in the neutral neither/nor position, with the proportion rating the council as poor actually falling slightly over this period.

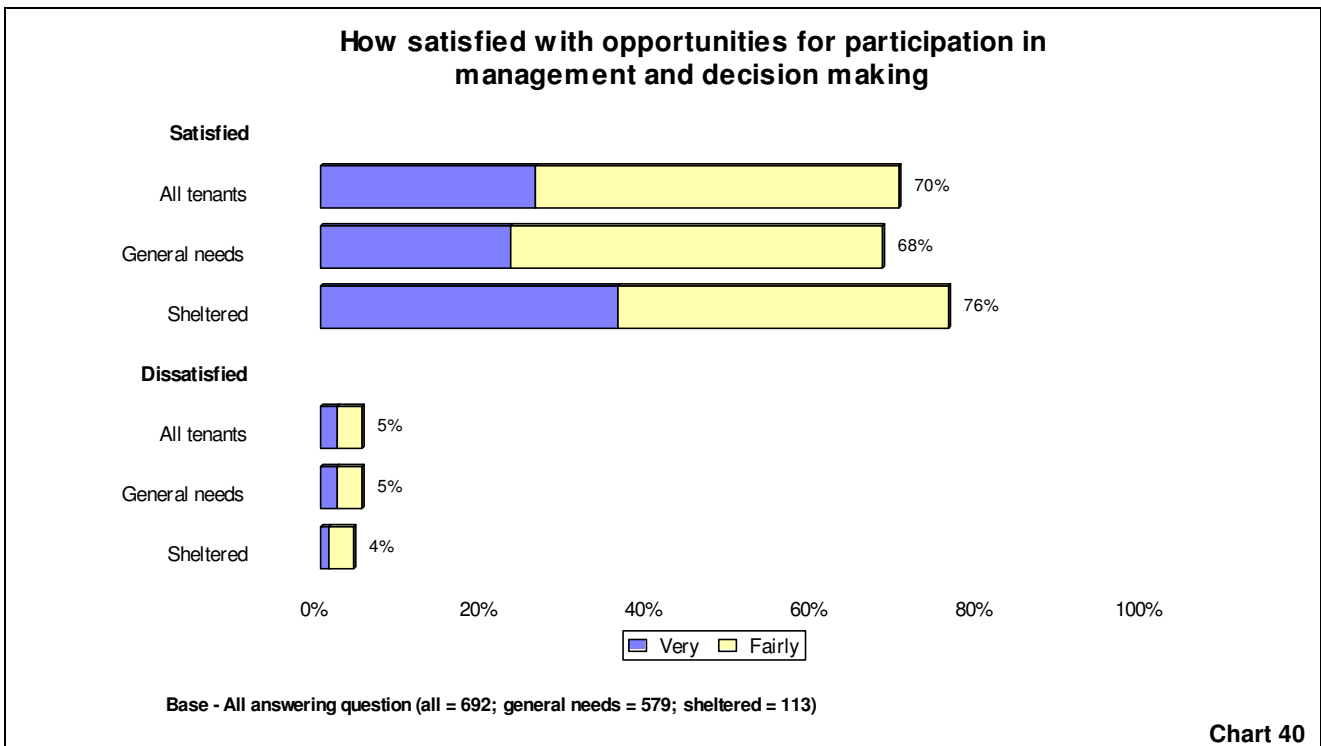


When asked about opportunities for participation in management and decision making, a large proportion of tenants expressed no view on the issue i.e. 25% of those who answered the question opted for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.

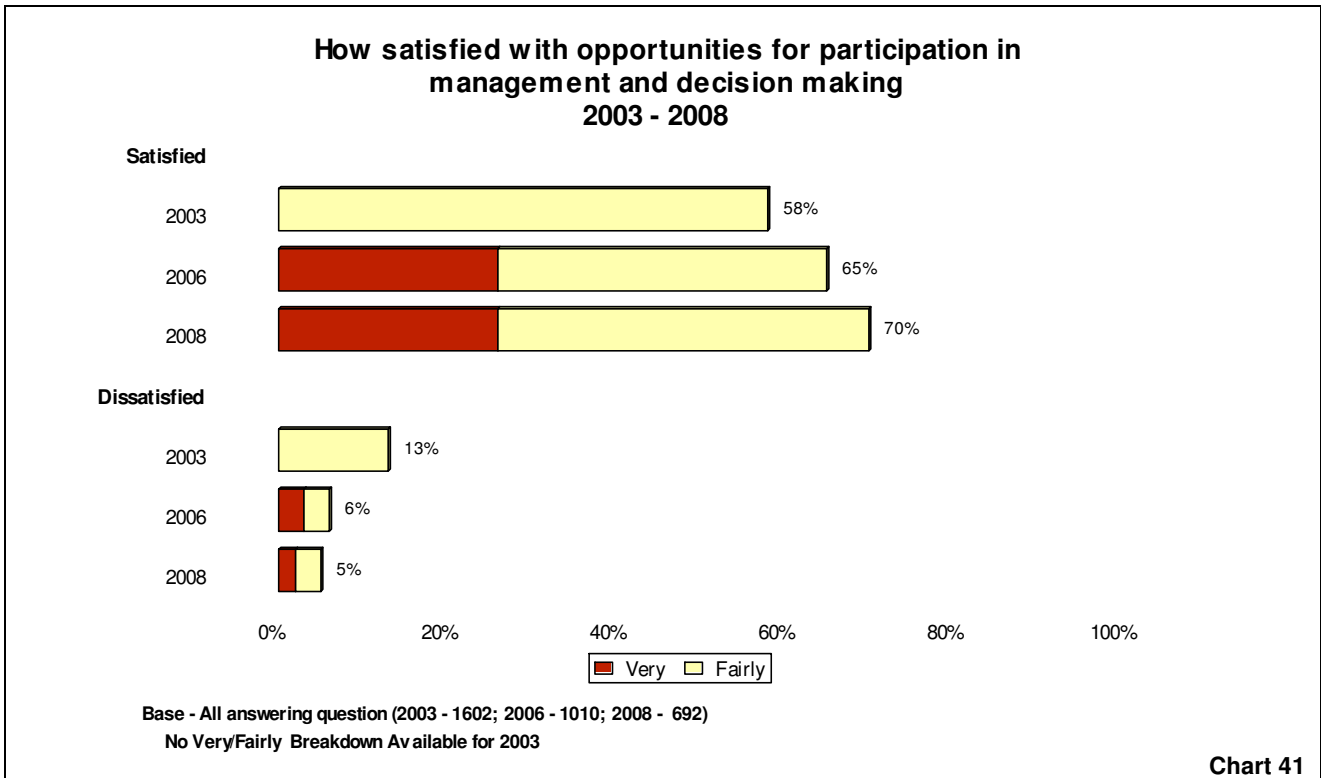
Amongst those with an opinion, response was positive, with 70% satisfied and 5% dissatisfied.



Again, tenants in sheltered/supported housing tend to be more positive in their response than general needs tenants - 76% being satisfied compared with 68% of general needs tenants (though again the difference is not statistically significant).

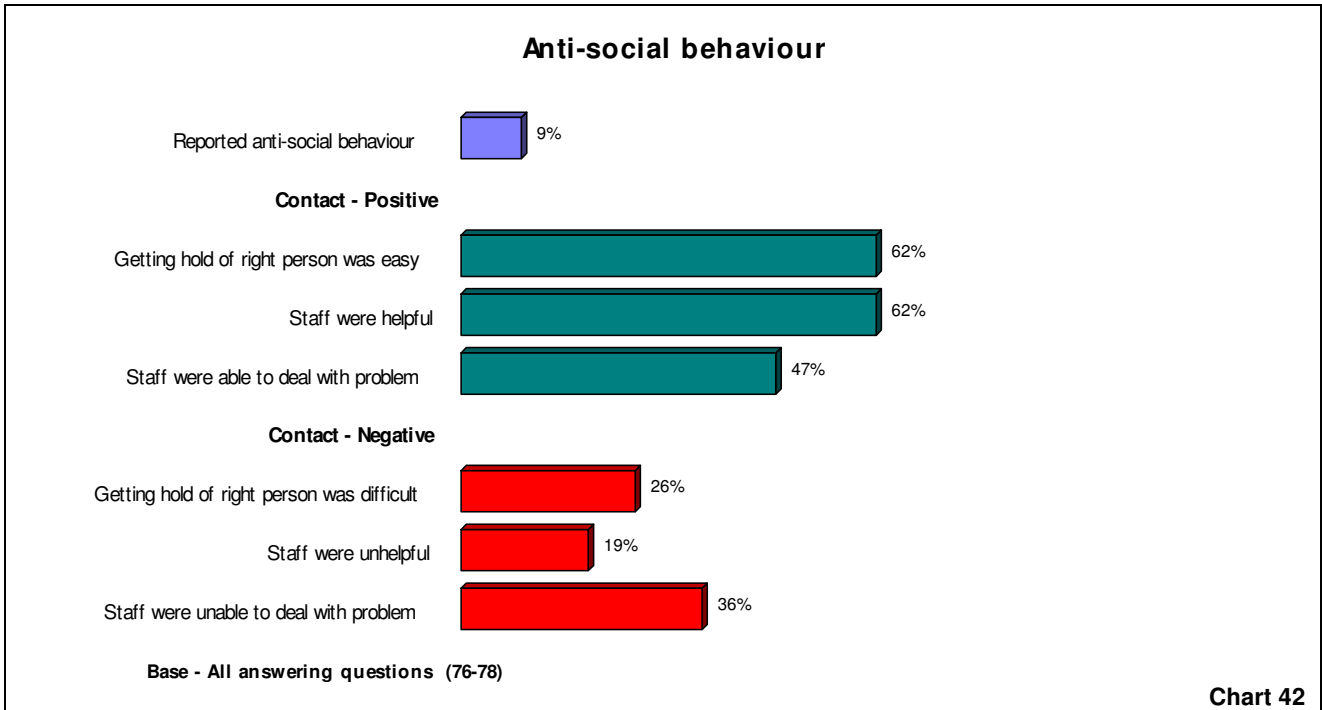


The chart below shows a steady increase in the level of satisfaction amongst those who expressed a view on this issue, rising from 58% in 2003 to 70% on the latest survey (a statistically significant difference).

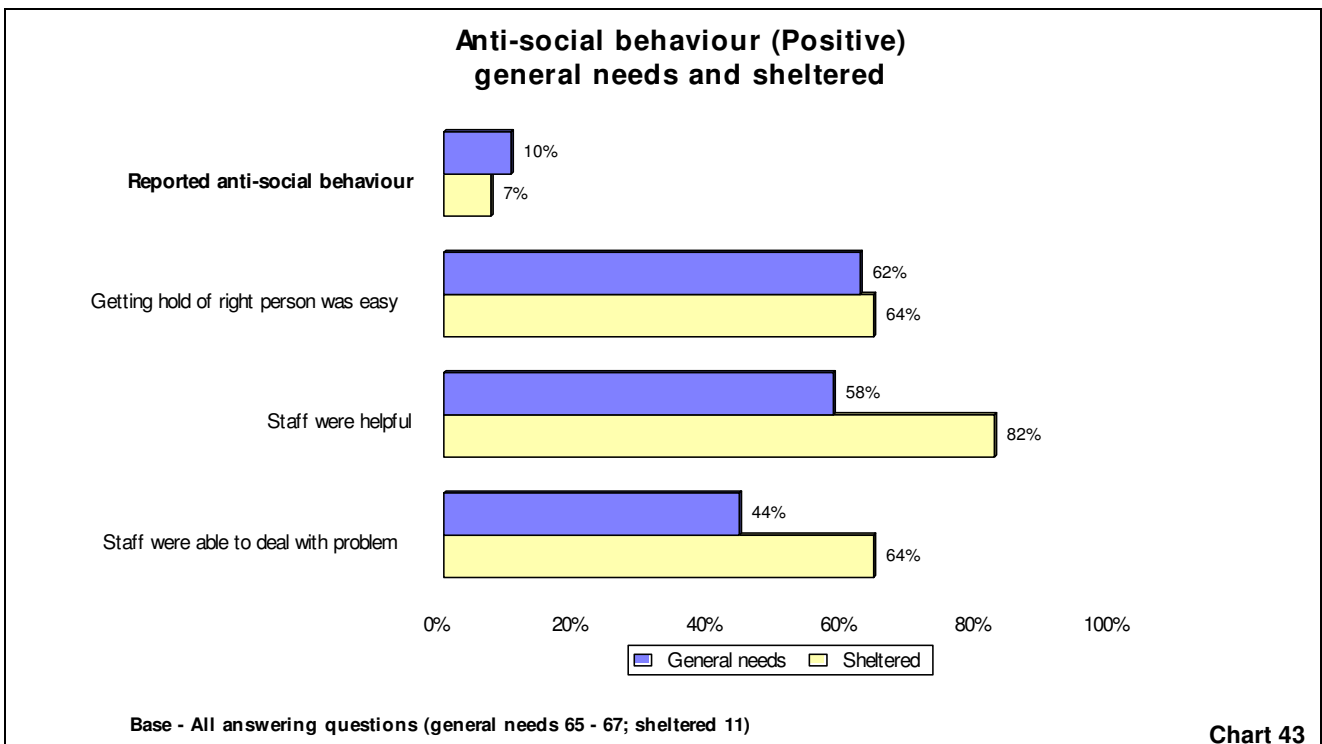


Anti-social behaviour

Overall, 9% of tenants say they have reported anti-social behaviour to the council in the last twelve months. While just under two-thirds of those who did so said that getting hold of the right person was easy, and that staff were helpful, fewer than half said that staff were able to deal with the problem; 36% claiming they were unable to help (the remainder responding neither/nor).



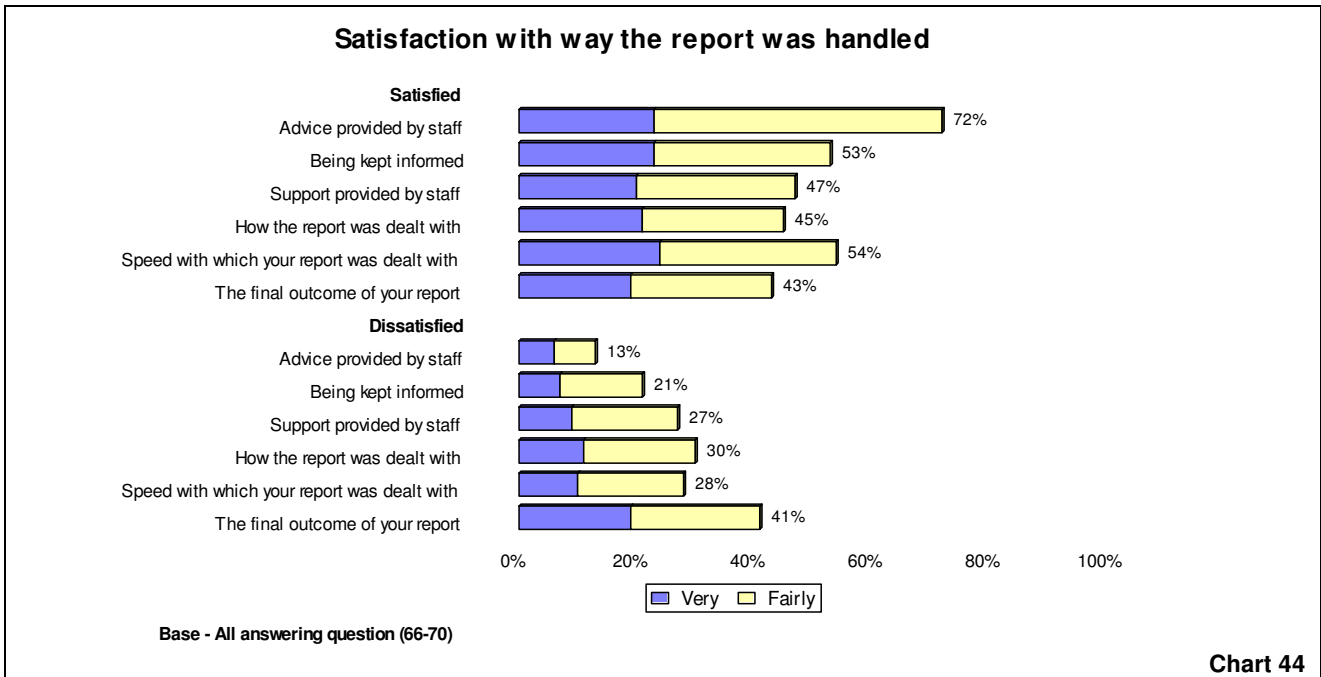
The chart below shows response to this question for general needs and sheltered housing tenants. Although the chart shows a big difference in response, it should be borne in mind that only 11 sheltered housing tenants had reported anti-social behaviour and so the data is not statistically reliable.



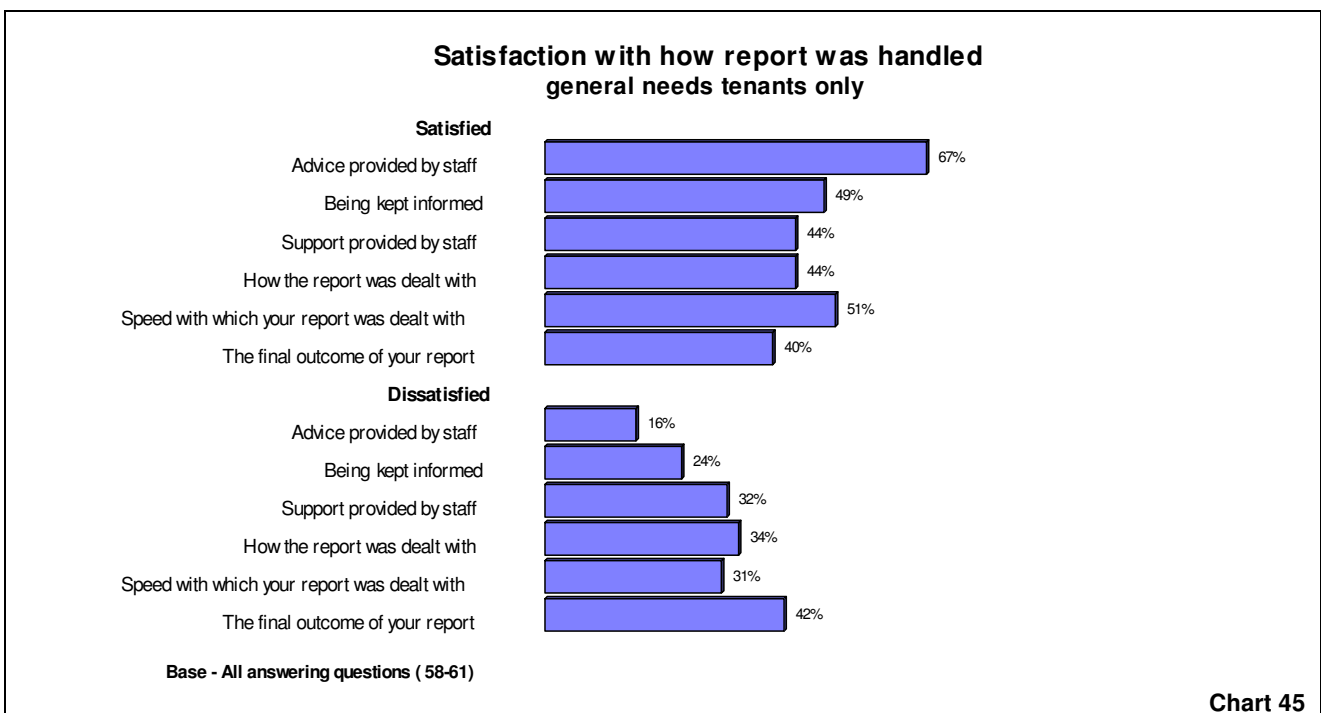
When asked how satisfied they were with the way the report was handled reaction was very mixed.

While almost three-quarters of those who reported an incident said they were satisfied with the advice provided by staff, fewer were satisfied with the follow up procedures (between 45% and 53%) and only 43% with the final outcome.

Whilst some ticked the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied box, as shown on the chart below, there is a significant group who were dissatisfied with the way things were handled, with 41% dissatisfied with the final outcome.



The chart below shows response to this question for general needs tenants only as this is the data which will be reported to the Audit Commission. Data for sheltered housing tenants is statistically unreliable being based on only a handful of responses.

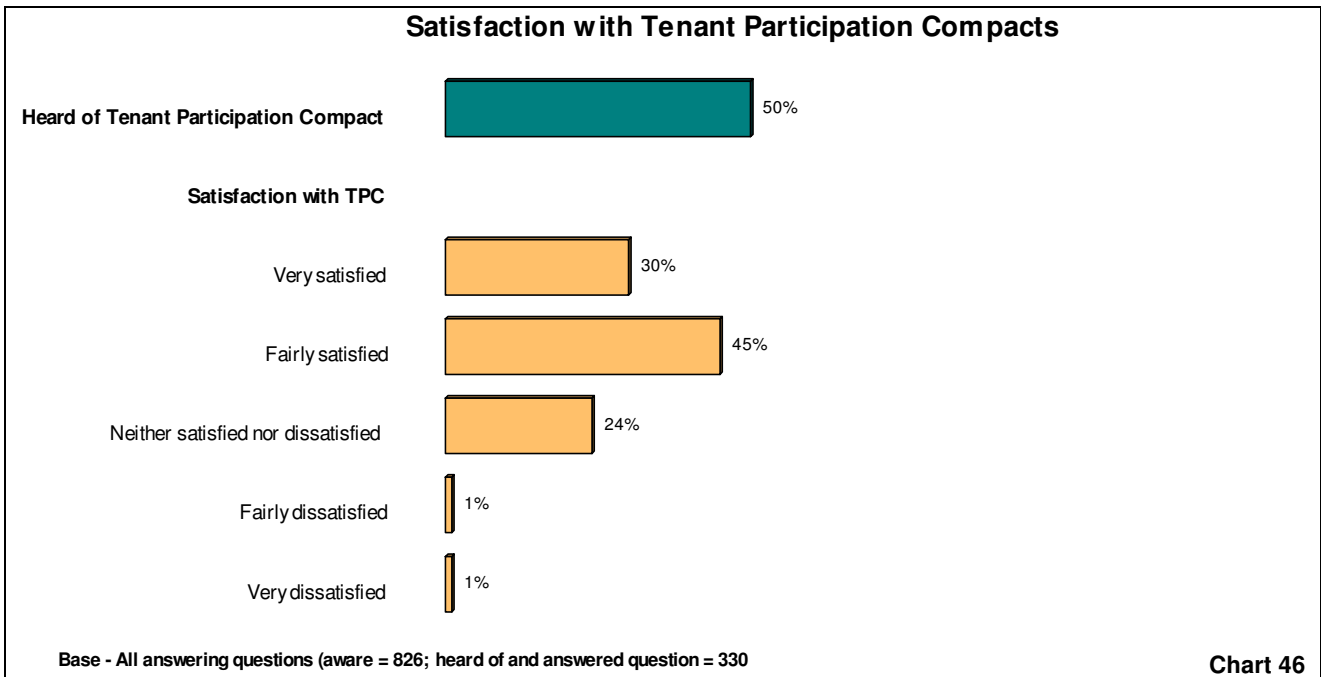


Tenant Participation Compacts

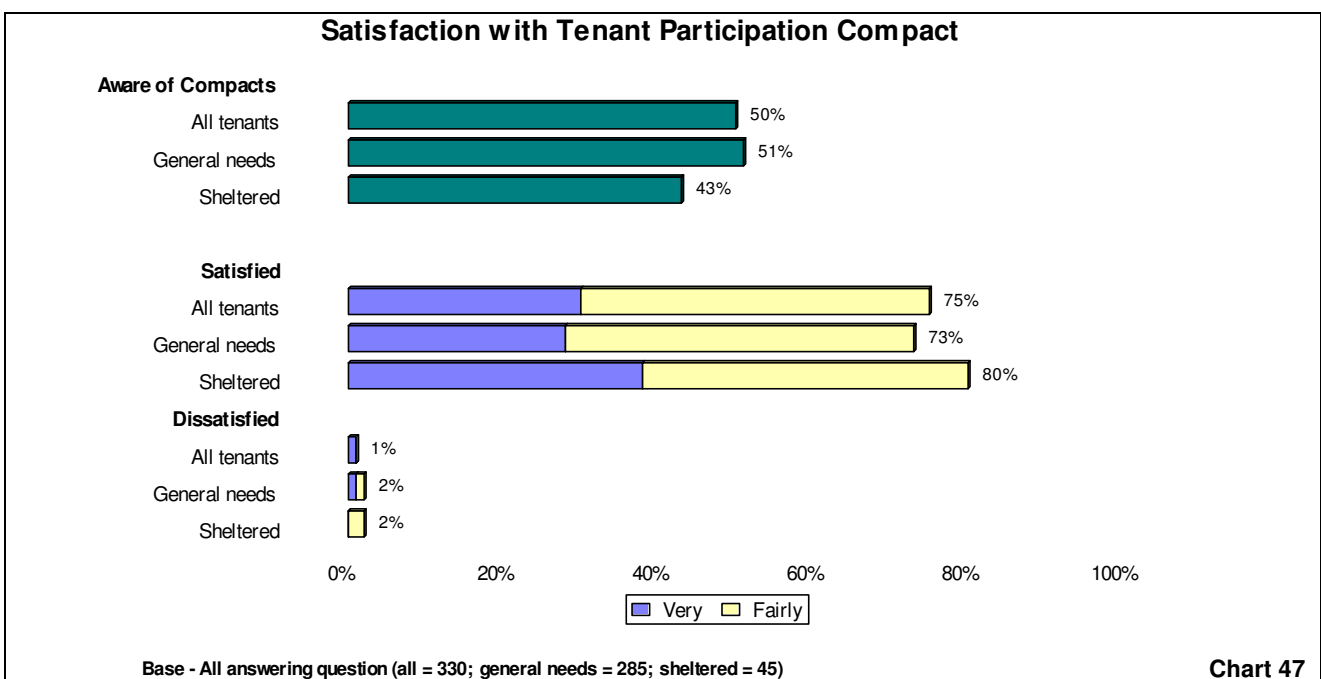
Half of all tenants are aware of Tenant Participation Compacts. This is similar to the level seen in 2003 (51%), though awareness in 2006 had risen to 59%.

When asked to say how satisfied they are with their locally agreed compact, 24% of those who answered the question replied neither satisfied nor dissatisfied suggesting that they have view on the matter.

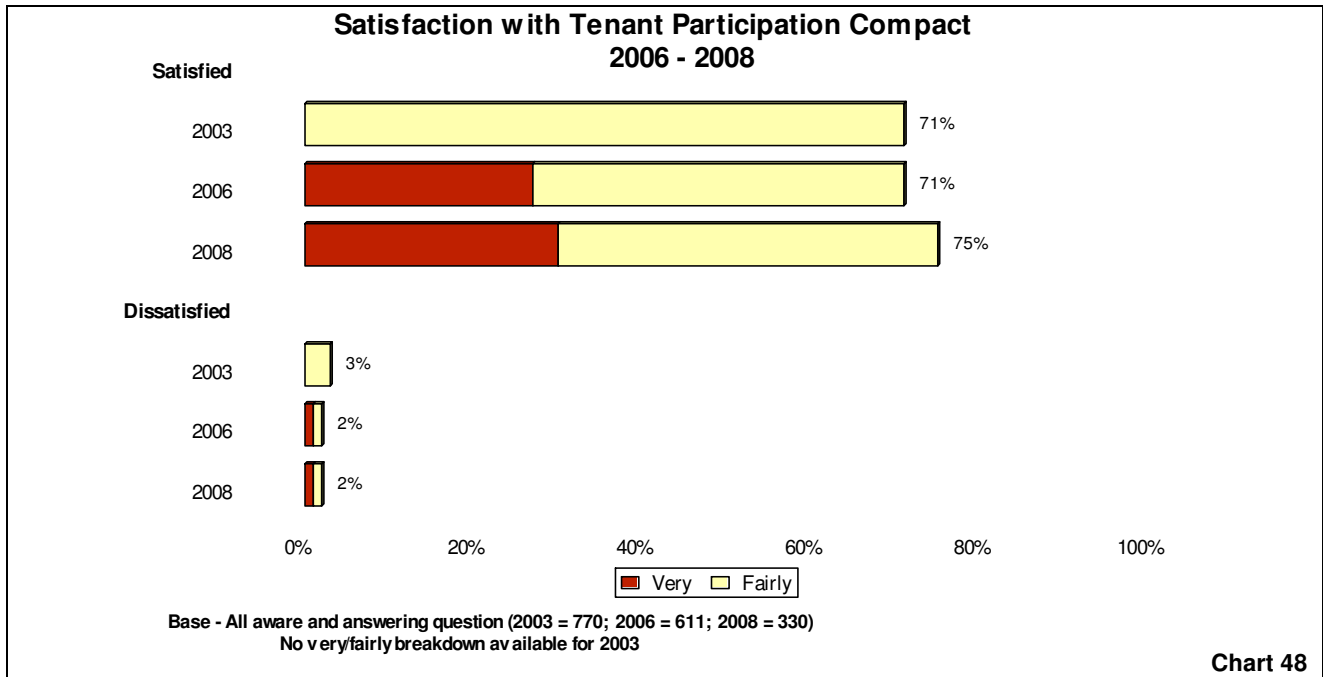
Amongst the remainder the balance of opinion is favourable – 30% being very satisfied and 45% fairly satisfied.



As shown on the chart below, awareness of Tenant Participation Compacts is somewhat higher amongst general needs tenants (47%) than sheltered housing tenants (39%). Again sheltered housing tenants show a higher level of satisfaction, though given the very small number of this group answering this question (45) the difference is not statistically significant.



The chart below shows an increase in the level of satisfaction with Tenant Participation Compacts on the latest survey – up from 71% in both 2003 and 2006 to 75% (though the difference is not statistically significant).



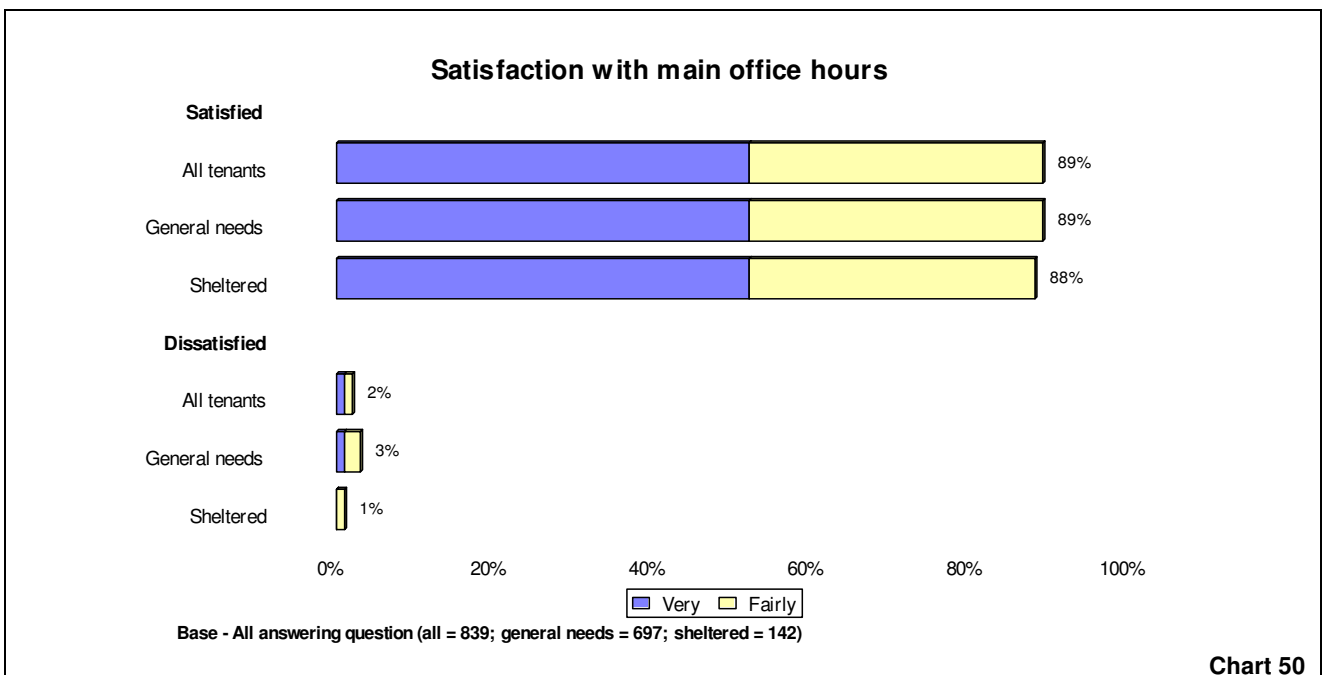
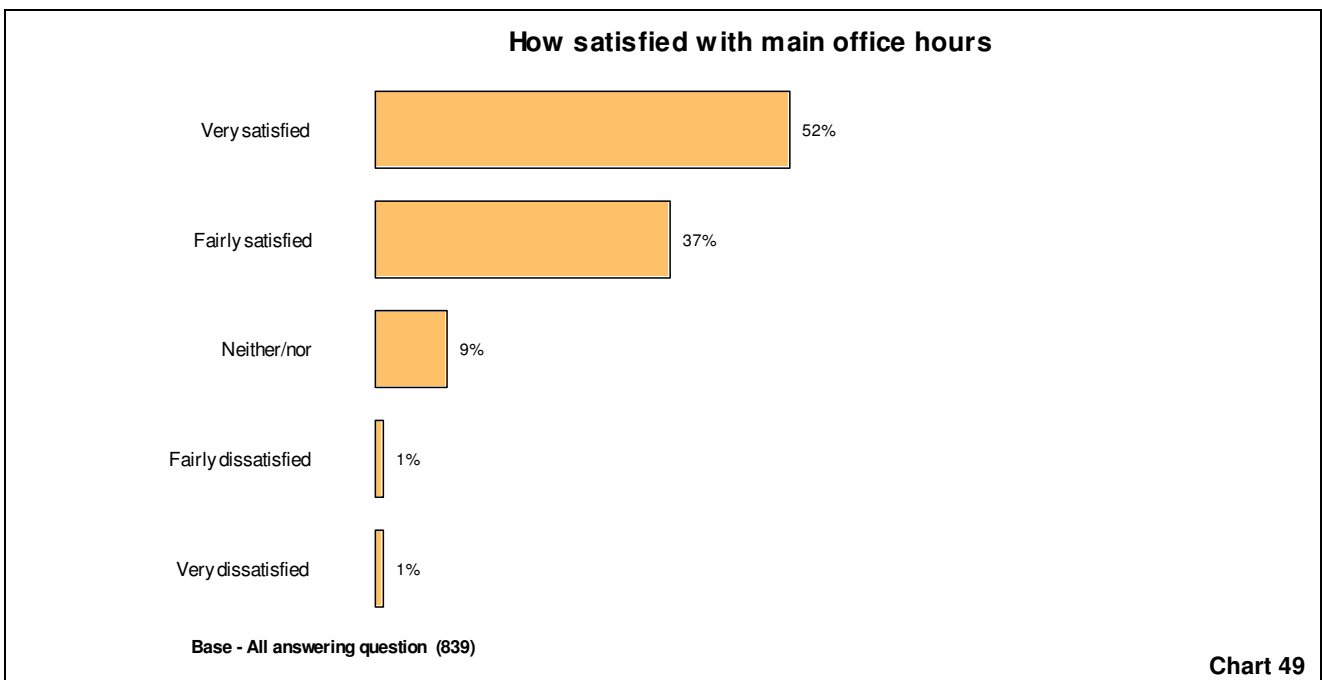
Accessing services

Tenants were reminded of the hours during which housing services can be contacted i.e.

- Main office hours – Monday to Thursday 8:45 am to 5:15 pm, Friday 8:45 am to 4.45 pm
- Enquiries at locality offices – main office hours plus Saturday mornings
- Reporting emergency repairs – any time of day or night
- Day to day repairs – contractors can make evening and Saturday morning appointments

..... and were then asked to say how satisfied they are with the main office hours.

As shown on the charts below, the vast majority are happy with these opening hours – 52% being very satisfied, and 37% fairly satisfied, with little difference between general needs and sheltered housing tenants.

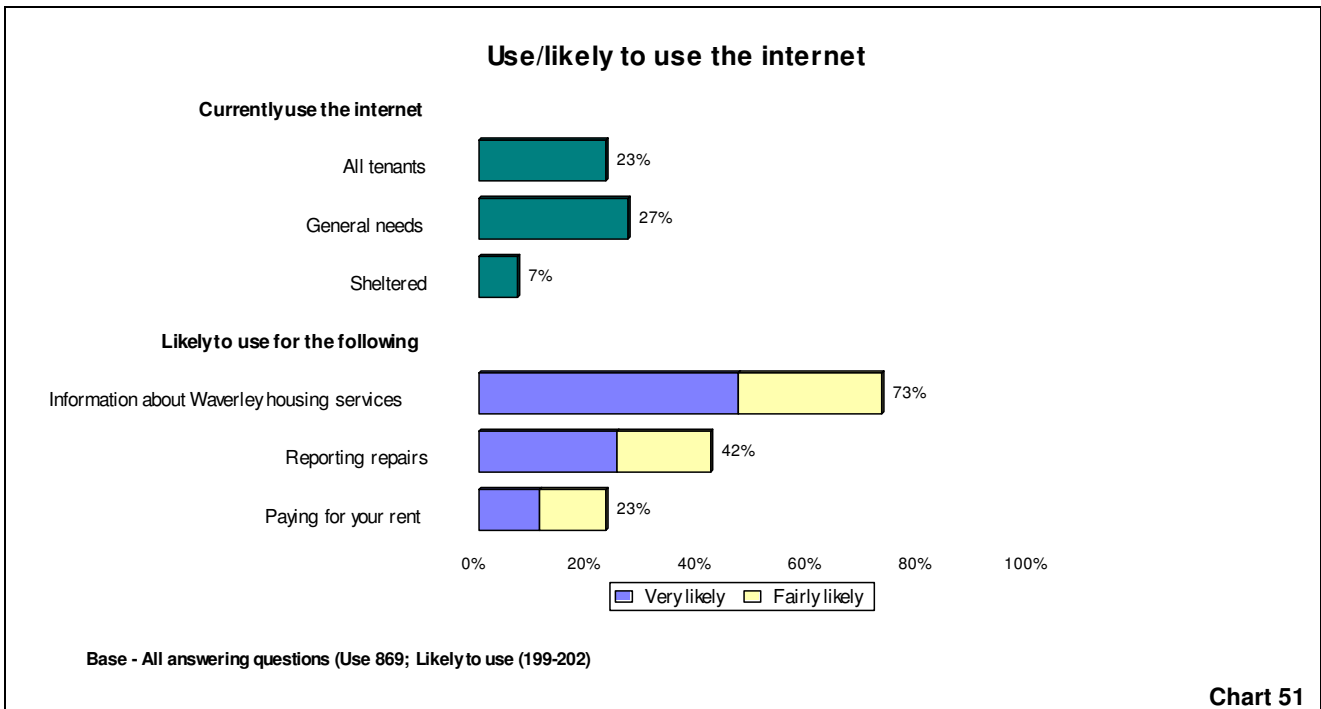


Use/likely use of the internet

Currently 23% of tenants say they use the internet (either at home, work or a public access point).

Very few sheltered housing tenants currently use the internet – 7% compared with 27% of general needs tenants.

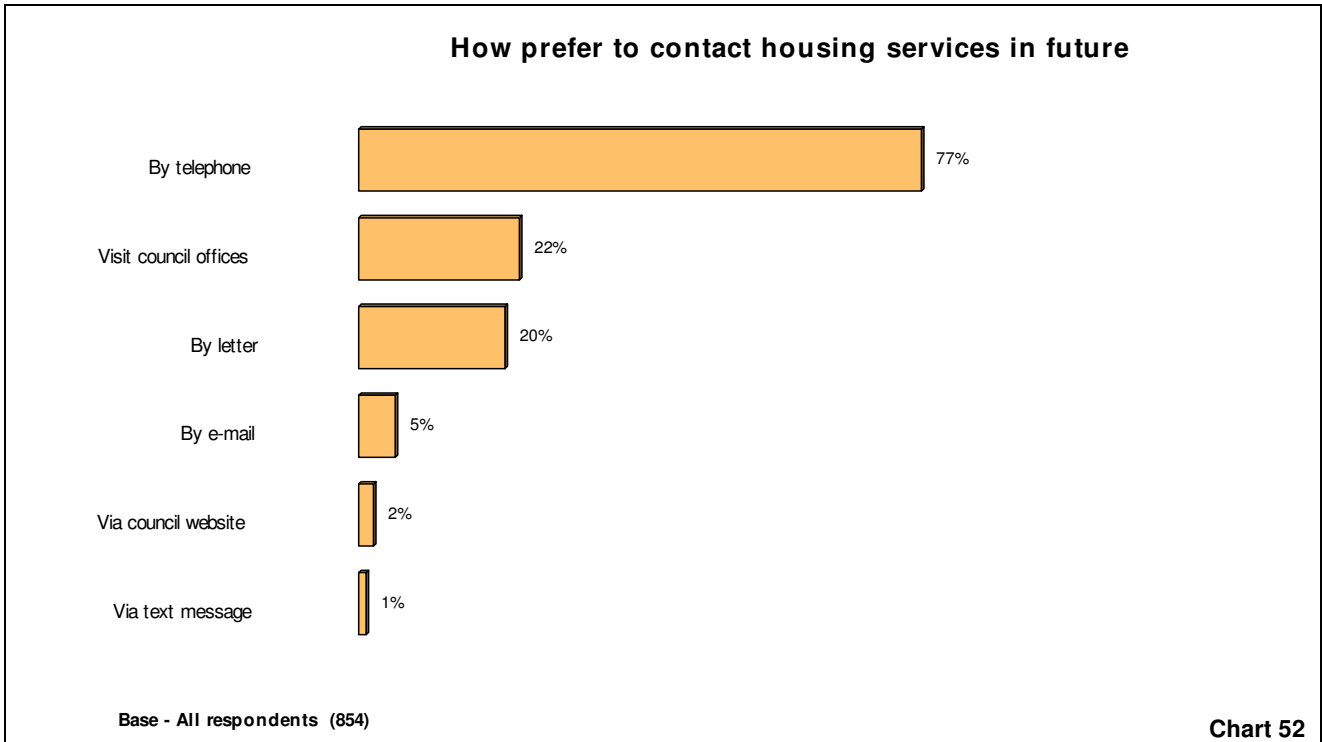
While almost three quarters of those with access to the internet say they would use it to look up information about Waverley housing services, only 42% would use it to report repairs and only 23% would use it to pay their rent (representing only 5% of all tenants).



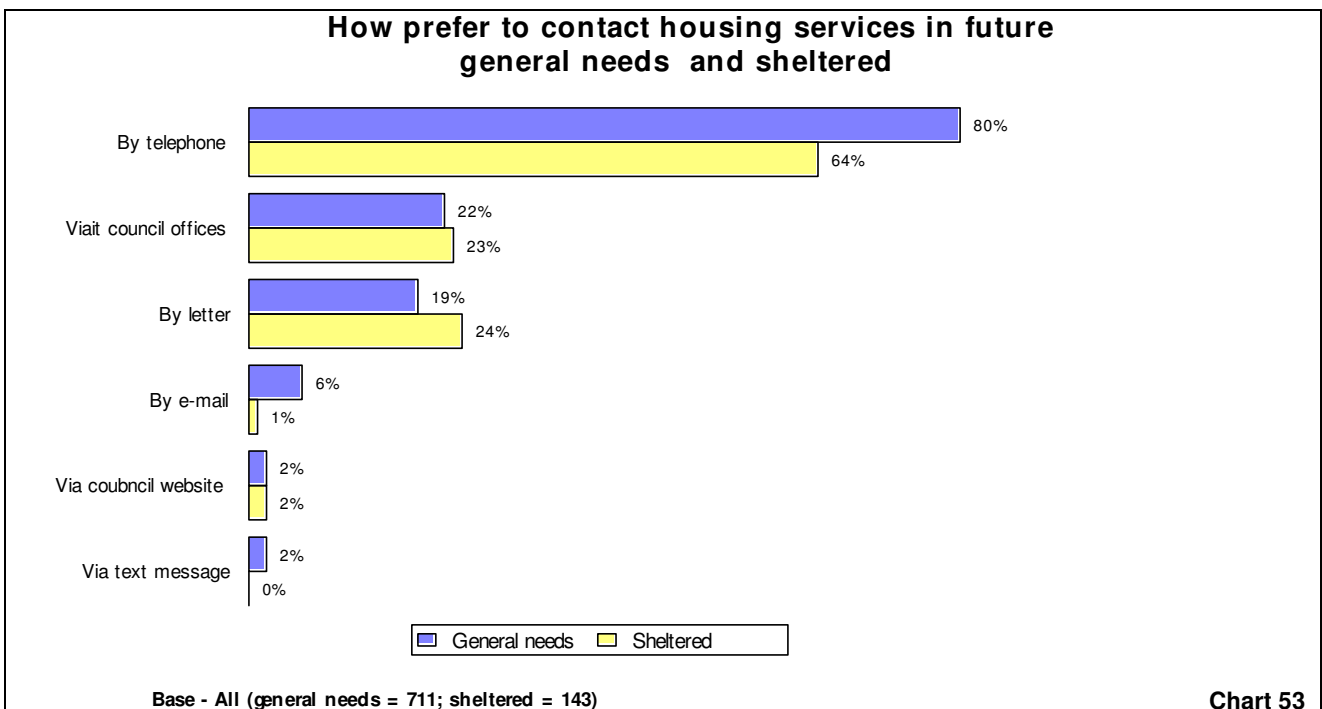
Preferred method of communication

When asked how they would prefer to contact housing services in the future, the telephone emerges as the most popular method, selected by more than three-quarters of tenants.

Almost equal proportions would opt for visiting the council offices (22%) and by letter (20%).

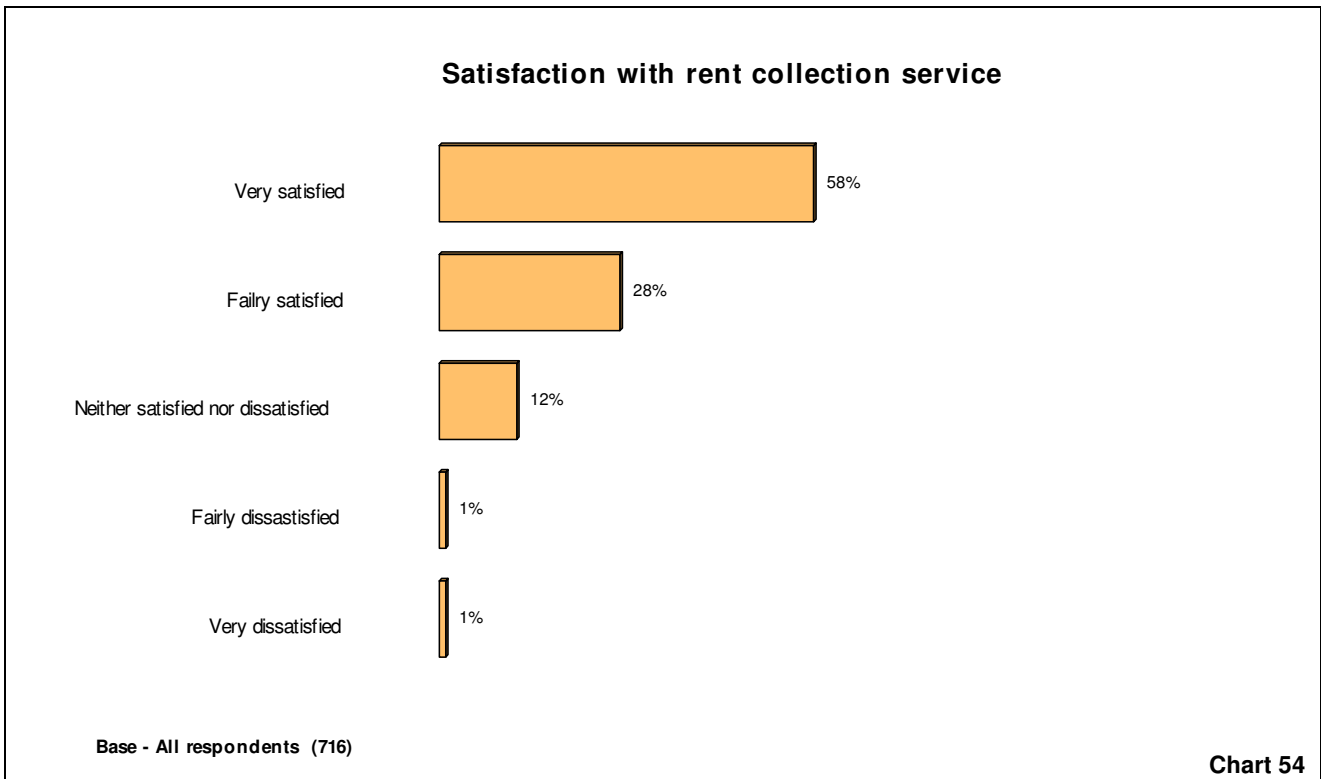


As shown on the chart below although fewer sheltered housing tenants opted for telephone contact (64% compared with 80% of general needs tenants), this tended not to affect other options to a great extent (due to multiple responses).

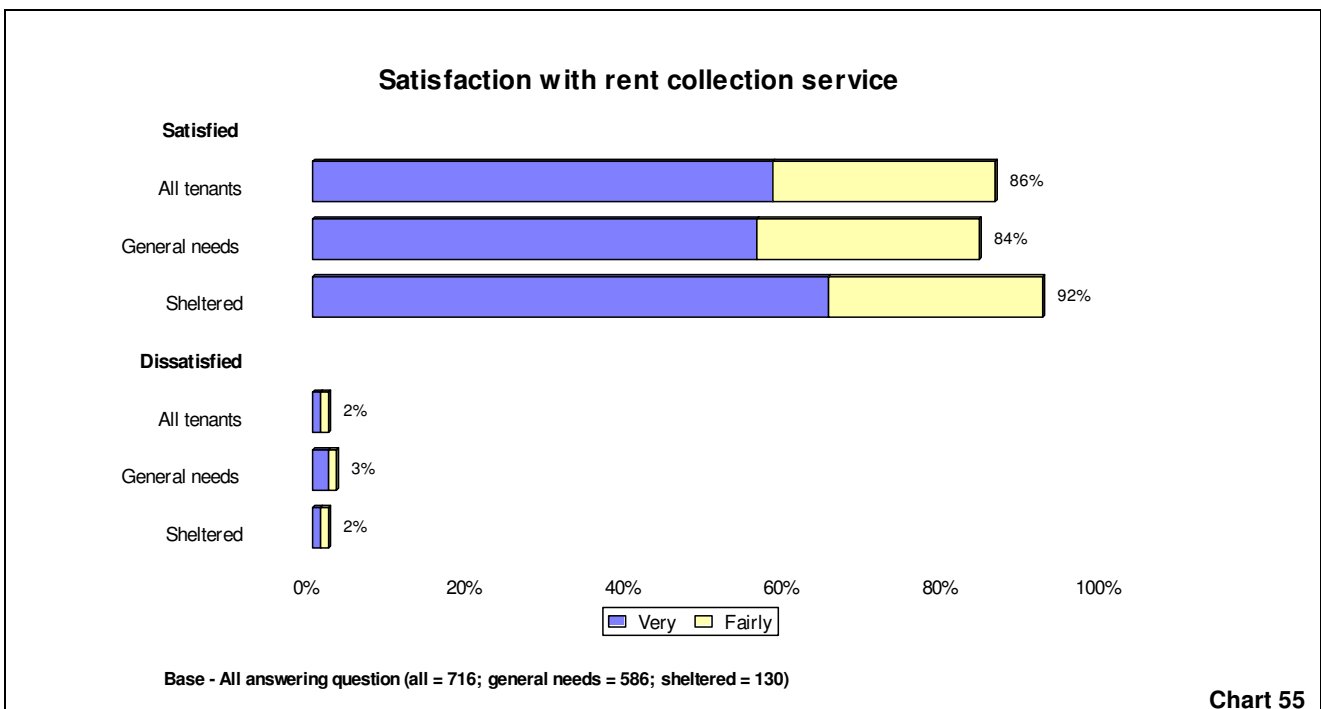


Satisfaction with rent collection service

The vast majority of tenants are satisfied with the rent collection service – 58% being very satisfied and 28% fairly satisfied.



As shown on the chart below, sheltered housing tenants tend to rate the rent collection service more highly than do general needs tenants – 92% being satisfied compared with 84% of general needs tenants (though the difference is accounted for by a higher proportion of general needs tenants opting for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position).



Other comments

At the end of the questionnaire tenants were invited to add any comments they wished to make.

Just under a quarter chose to do so, and the table below shows the range of comments given, together with the number making each.

Made any comment	190 (21%)
	Number mentioning
Good service from council/satisfied with service	29
New windows needed	24
Long wait for repairs to be done/hard work to get repairs done	24
Poor repairs/bad service from workmen	21
Need repairs/modernisation to kitchen	15
Problems with neighbours	14
Poor maintenance of grass/hedges/trees	13
Problem with/lack of car parking	11
Need repairs/modernisation to bathroom	9
General modernisation of property needed	8
Need new external doors/poor state of external doors	7
Poor attitude of council staff	7
Damp/condensation problems	5
Need a warden on site 24/7	5
Good friendly staff	4
Help needed with interior decoration	4
Good service from workmen/good repairs	3
Need better maintenance of communal areas - halls/doors/stairs	3
Easier/faster system to exchange/transfer from properties	3
New fencing/gates needed	3
All repairs/modernisation have been carried out by ourselves	2
Lack of support for disabled/elderly tenants	2
Rents are too high	1
Problems with gutters/drainpipes	1
Showers needed as well/instead of baths	1
Help needed with garden maintenance	1
Lack of communication from council	1
Council promised to issue a list of companies who could do jobs for tenants at reasonable rates	1
Staff not knowledgeable about Housing Benefit/Council Tax	1

Appendices

Technical Appendix

Method

Waverley Borough Council supplied a data base of all council tenants names and addresses to QCL Market Research.

The file contained 4,759 records - 4,483 for general needs properties and 276 for sheltered/supported properties. From these 1,300 general needs tenants were selected for mailing at random from the general needs list, together with all 276 sheltered housing tenants.

Questionnaires were mailed to named individuals on 2nd July 2008. A FREEPOST envelope was included for the return of the questionnaire.

Those who had not responded by 18th July were sent a reminder which comprised of the same questionnaire with the covering letter changed to include a reminder message. A FREEPOST envelope was included for the return of the questionnaire.

Those who had still not responded by 6th August were sent a further reminder again comprising of the same questionnaire with the covering letter including a reminder message. A FREEPOST envelope was included for the return of the questionnaire.

By 27th August a total of 891 completed questionnaires had been received, together with 6 returned by the post office marked 'gone away' or 'not known at this address' – 3 from general needs tenants and 3 from sheltered housing tenants.

Completed questionnaires were received from 731 general needs tenants (56% response rate) and 160 sheltered/supported housing tenants (58% response).

All questionnaires were checked manually by QCL's experienced staff in preparation for data entry.

Data entry was carried out by experienced data entry staff and checked by the department supervisor.

A preliminary print out of results was examined by one of QCL's Directors and any errors were identified and corrected before data was finalised.

Questionnaire