

BVPI TENANTS' SURVEY

Background and objectives

Every local authority is expected to seek continuous improvement in the services that it provides. To measure progress on delivery, improvements, and to enable comparisons to be made between local authorities, the government in 1997 introduced a performance management framework of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). BVPIs cover a wide range of council services. The tenant's BVPIs are specifically designed to assess the views of council tenant households living in the local authority. This report is a summary of the October 2006 survey undertaken to hear tenants' views about Harrow services.

Methodology

Ipos MORI, who conducted the 2003 survey, undertook the survey for us. We followed the same procedure as the last tenant survey. This entailed a postal survey sent to 1600 randomly selected tenants with a booster sample of 500 questionnaires sent to areas with especially high proportions of black minority ethnic (BME) residents to ensure a good representation among this group. The survey was conducted between 1 September and 31 October 2006.

We followed the national guidelines and used the STATUS tenant's survey questionnaire template. The questions included are required by government to be asked of all local authorities to measure performance and allow comparison between authorities. Harrow elected to ask some extra questions, as we did in 2003, on estate services and caretaking.

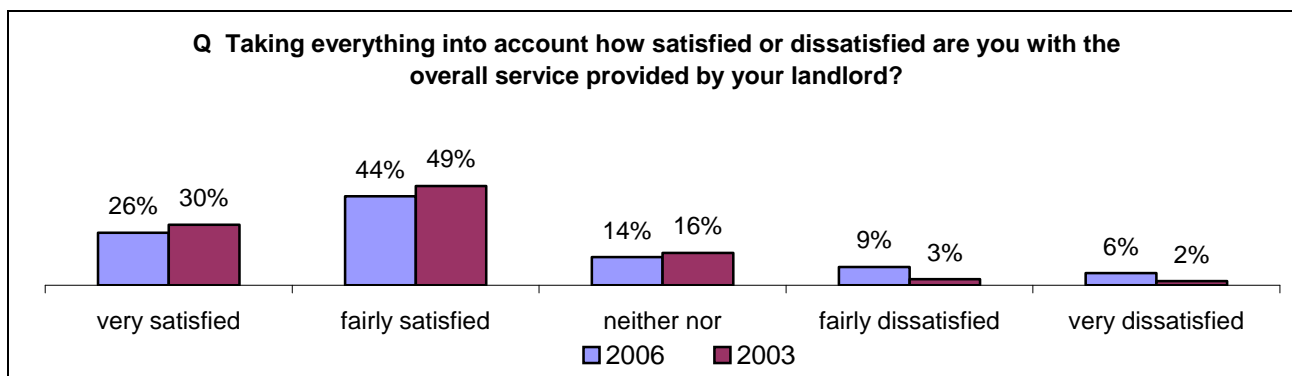
Overall 711 completed valid questionnaires were returned from the total sample. The government minimum requirement is 625 responses. The final response rate was 34%. In 2003 the response rate was slightly higher at 37%.

SUMMARY

Key satisfaction measures

Satisfaction with overall service provided by landlord forms the basis of BVPI 74.

- 70% of tenants who responded are fairly or very satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord. This represents a decline in satisfaction from 2003/04 when 79% of responding tenants reported satisfaction with overall services



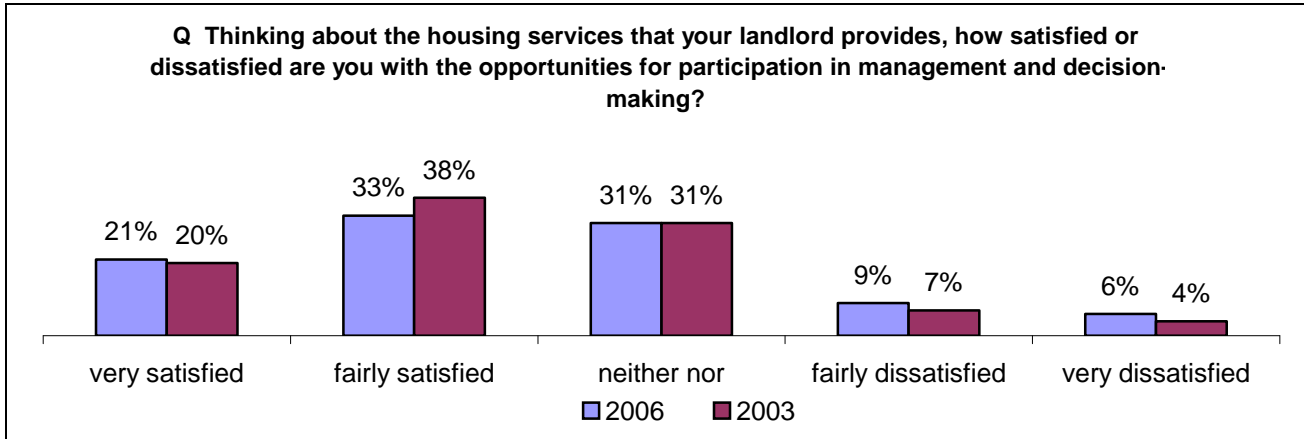
- Those expressing they were fairly or very dissatisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord has risen from 5% in 2003 to 15%
- The average level of satisfaction across all London Boroughs is 68%
- There is a small difference in those saying they are very or fairly satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord among white (73%) and BME tenants (69%), but BME tenants are more likely to be dissatisfied with their landlord than white tenants – 11% of BME respondents are very dissatisfied while 3% of white respondents say the same.

Q Taking everything into account how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall service provided by your landlord?

	% all	% white	% BME
Very satisfied	26%	26%	24%
Fairly satisfied	44%	47%	45%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14%	15%	15%
Fairly dissatisfied	6%	3%	6%
Very dissatisfied	6%	3%	11%

Satisfaction with opportunities for participation in management and decision-making forms the basis for BVPI 75.

- 54% of respondents are satisfied with opportunities for participation, representing a slight decline since 2003 when 57% (58% rounded up) reported they were very/fairly satisfied
- 15% expressed dissatisfaction with opportunities compared to 11% in 2003
- However 31% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied – suggesting this is not a particular issue for a sizeable amount of respondents
- The average level of satisfaction across all London Boroughs is 57%



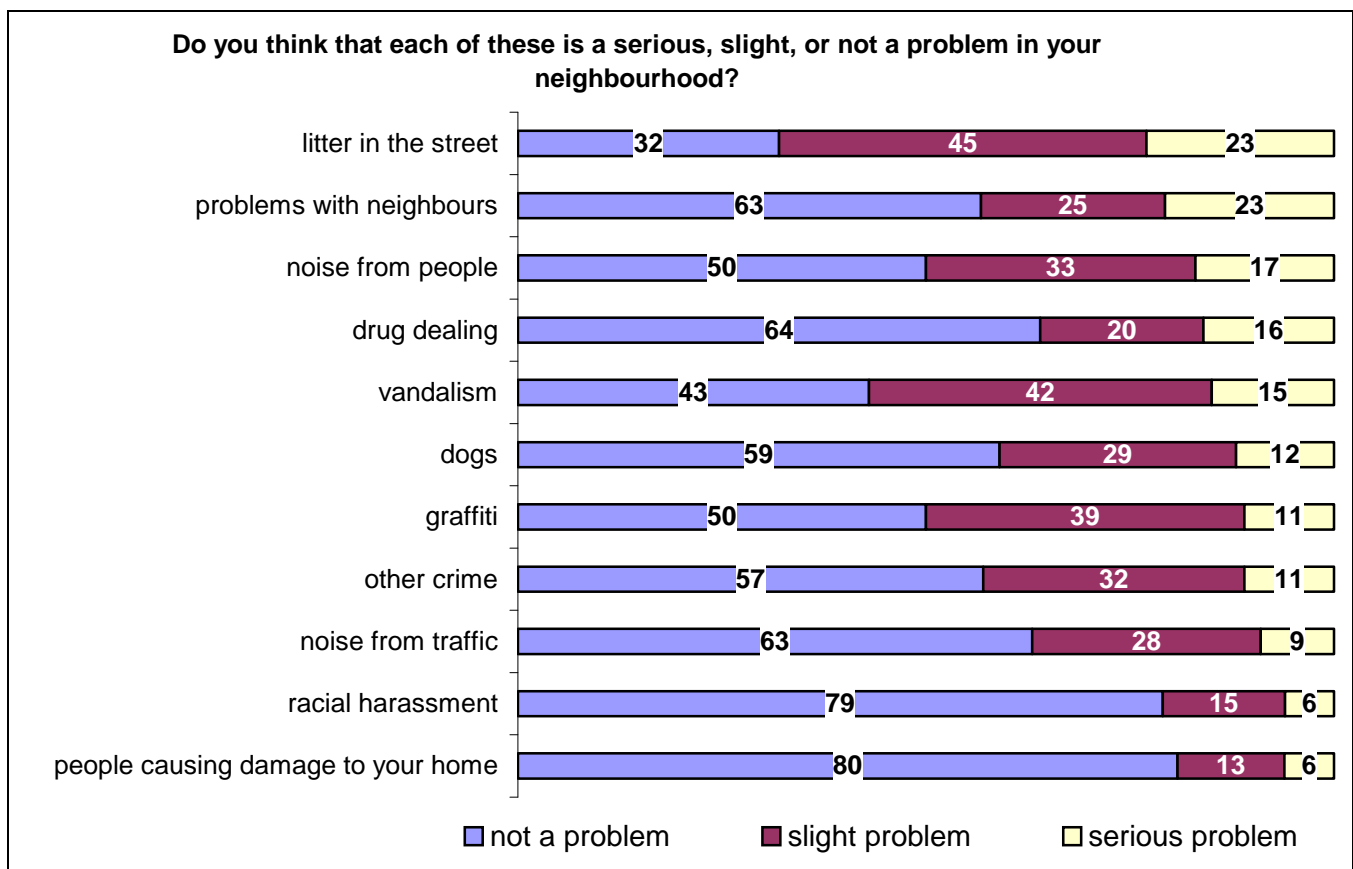
- When looking at this measure for BME tenants there is no difference in terms of overall satisfaction (54% for BME tenants and 53% for white tenants), however, BME tenants are more likely to say that they are very satisfied when compared to their white counterparts (25% v 17%).

Q Thinking about the housing services that your landlord provides, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in management and decision making?

	% all	% white	% BME
Very satisfied	21%	17%	25%
Fairly satisfied	33%	36%	29%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	31%	33%	32%
Fairly dissatisfied	9%	9%	6%
Very dissatisfied	6%	4%	8%

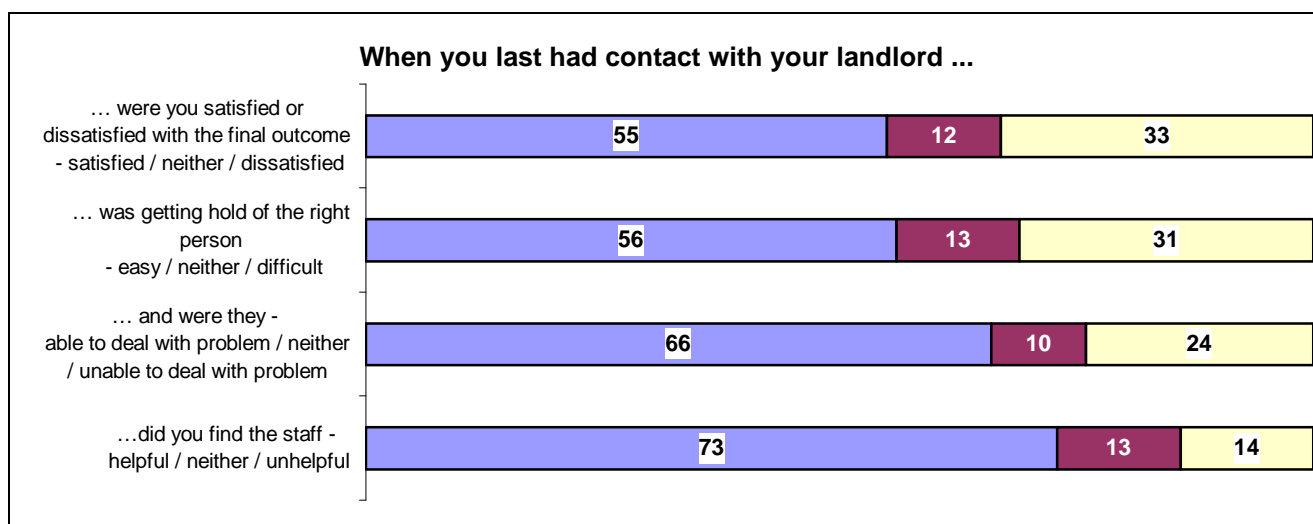
Housing & neighbourhood

- 77% of respondents consider their rent to represent fairly or very good value for money, an increase of 3% since the last survey
- 68% consider their property to be in fairly or very good condition, compared with 14% who consider their property to be in poor condition. In 2003 over 76% described their property as fairly or very good
- 67% are fairly or very satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, although 17% expressed dissatisfaction. In the borough-wide general survey of all residents (not just tenants) people were asked if they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live. The response of 65% satisfied matches findings from this survey of tenants which shows 67% satisfied
- Tenants were asked to consider and rate a series of potential neighbourhood problems. 68% rated litter in the street as the most serious problem – similar results were reported in the last survey in 2003.



Contact with Landlord

- 68% of respondents indicated that they had been in contact with their landlord in the last 12 months
- 79% made contact by phone
- 17% visited the office
- 76% of contact related to repairs.
- When rating aspects of contact with their landlord results indicate that older tenants are generally more positive than tenants overall
- White tenants (70%) were more likely than BME tenants (66%) to report staff able to deal with their problem

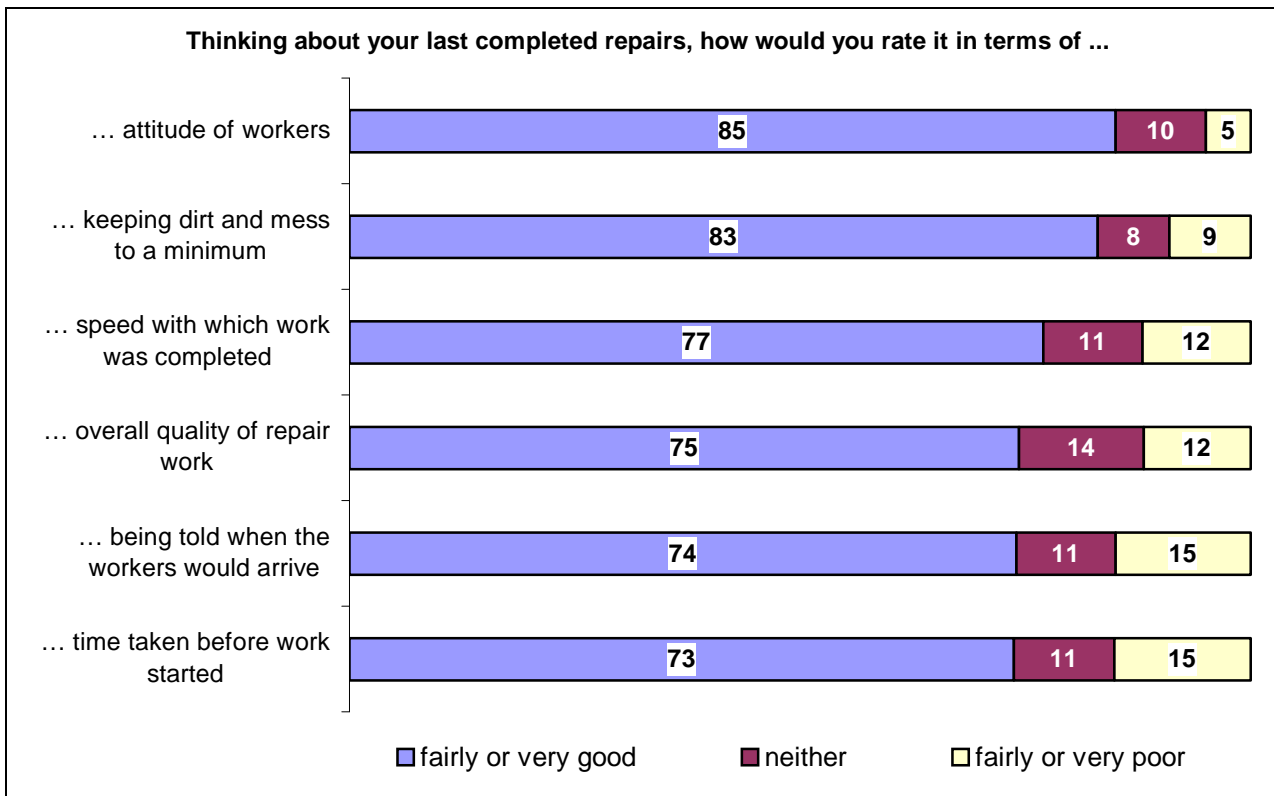


Communicating with your landlord

- 74% of tenants indicate their landlord is good at keeping them informed although one in ten rated them as very or fairly poor.
- 83% of older tenants (those aged 65+) are more likely to report that they are satisfied with this measure.
- 79% of tenants consider their landlord takes their views into account either a lot (30%) or a little (49%)
- 32% of tenants have heard of the Tenant Participation Compact (TPC), of these 67% are satisfied with the locally agreed TPC.

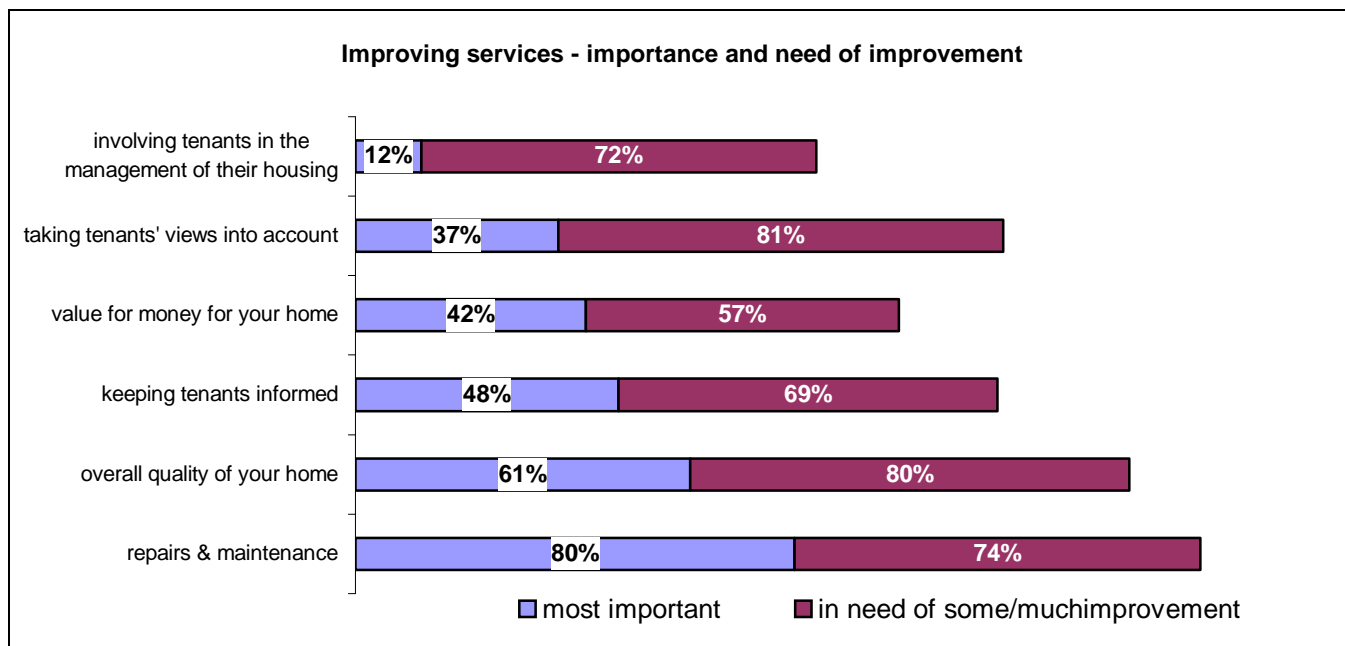
Repairs Service

- 72% of tenants indicated they are satisfied with the way repairs and maintenance are dealt with, although almost 19% expressed dissatisfaction with the service
- 80% of older tenants (those aged 65+) are particularly satisfied.
- 73% of tenants had requested repairs in the last 12 months and the following chart details how they rated their last completed repair



Improving Services

- Repairs and maintenance, the overall quality of the home and keeping tenants informed are the services most commonly identified as important
- Taking tenants' views into account, overall quality of your home and repairs and maintenance are the most commonly identified services in need of improvement
- The 2003 survey produced the same priority areas

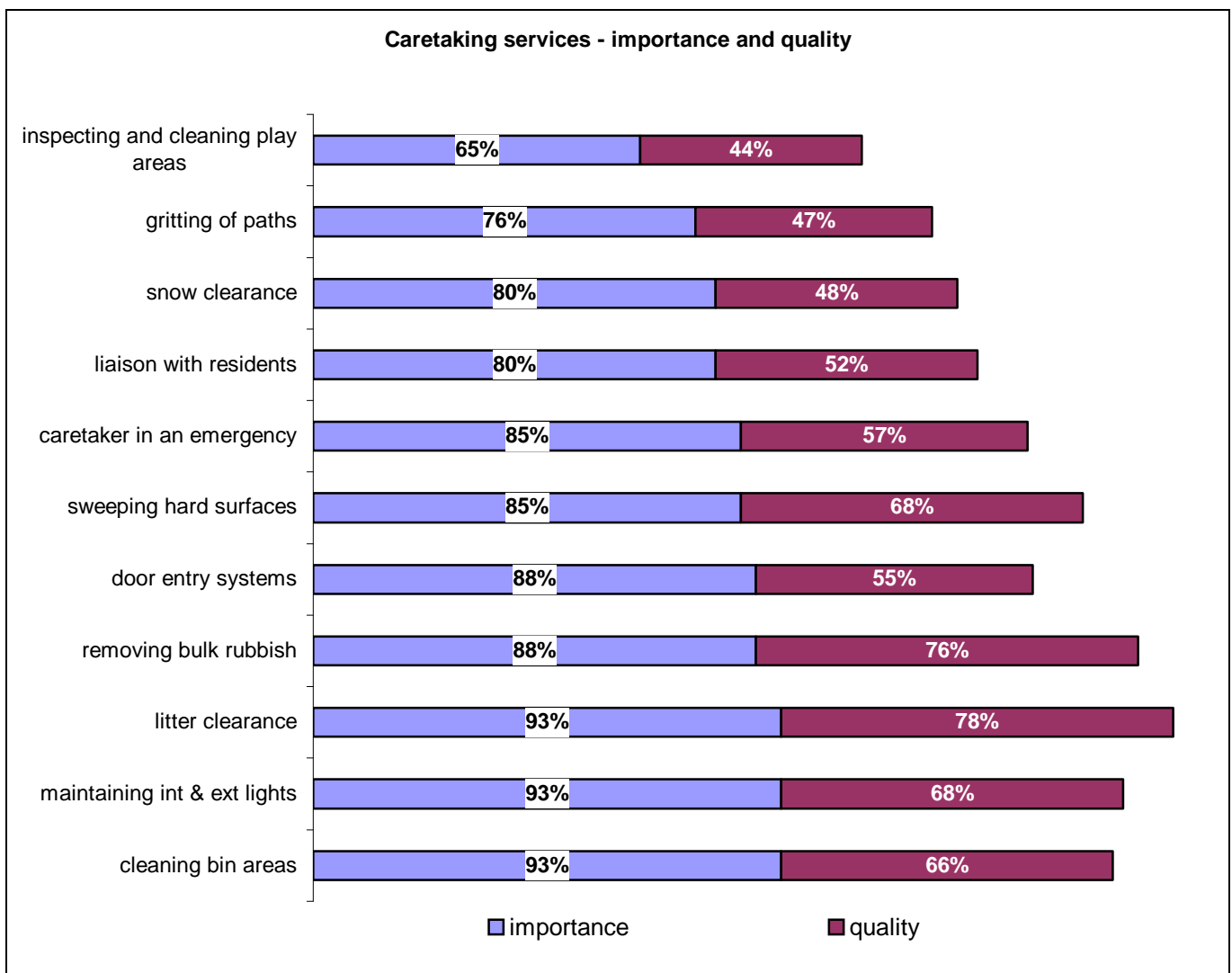


Estate Services

- 68% rated the cutting of communal grass as good and over 52% thought shrub / flowerbed maintenance was good. An improvement since the last survey when 59% of tenants rated grass cutting as good and shrub / flowerbed maintenance was rated as good by 40% of tenants
- Tenants were most critical of recycling services with 31% considering them to be poor. In the 2003/04 survey 26% rated this service as poor

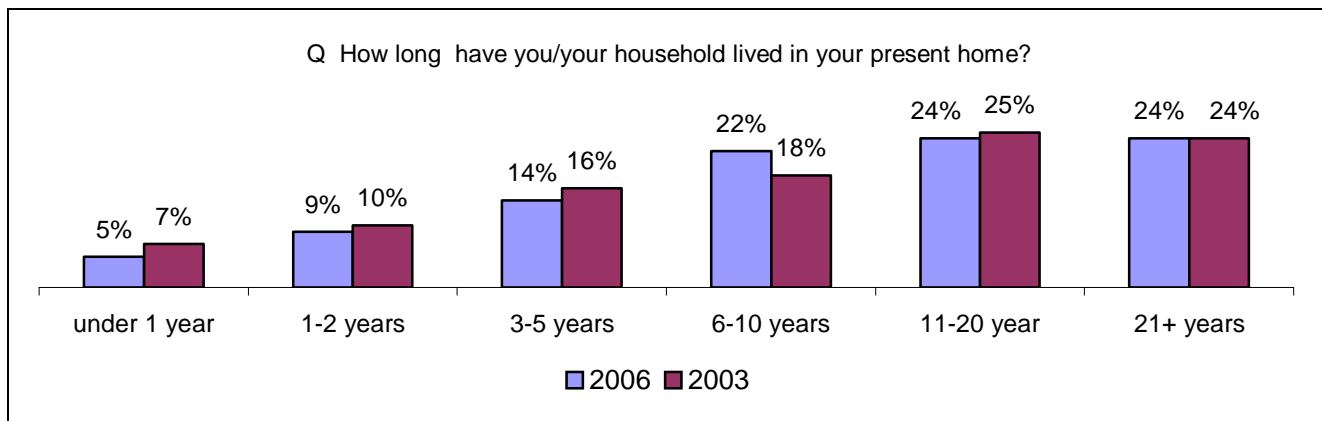
Caretaking Services

- 78% rated litter clearing, 76% removing bulk rubbish and 68% rated sweeping hard surfaces and maintaining internal and external lights as a good quality service
- 25% thought that the service providing a caretaker (who can be called in an emergency and who also checks door entry systems) is poor
- When asked to rate which services are most important to tenants, maintaining internal and external lights, litter clearance, cleaning bin areas and removing bulk rubbish were the considered the most important.
- When compared with the 2003 survey the 'good quality' of all of the services had increased by an average 18% rating and the 'importance' of the service had also increased by an average of 18% 32% of respondents have been a council tenant for 21+ years and 25% between 11 – 20 years
- 12% have been a tenant for 2 years or less

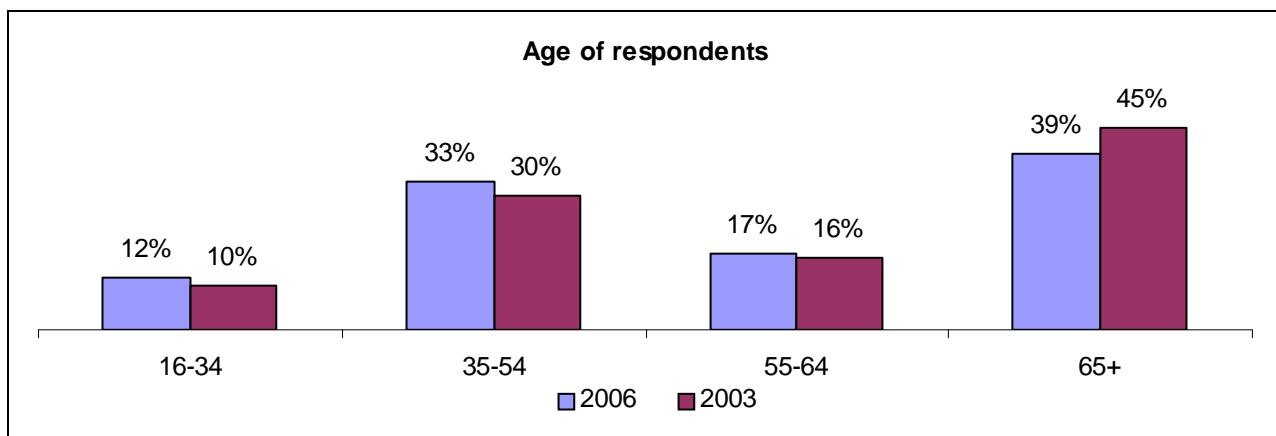


Respondent profile

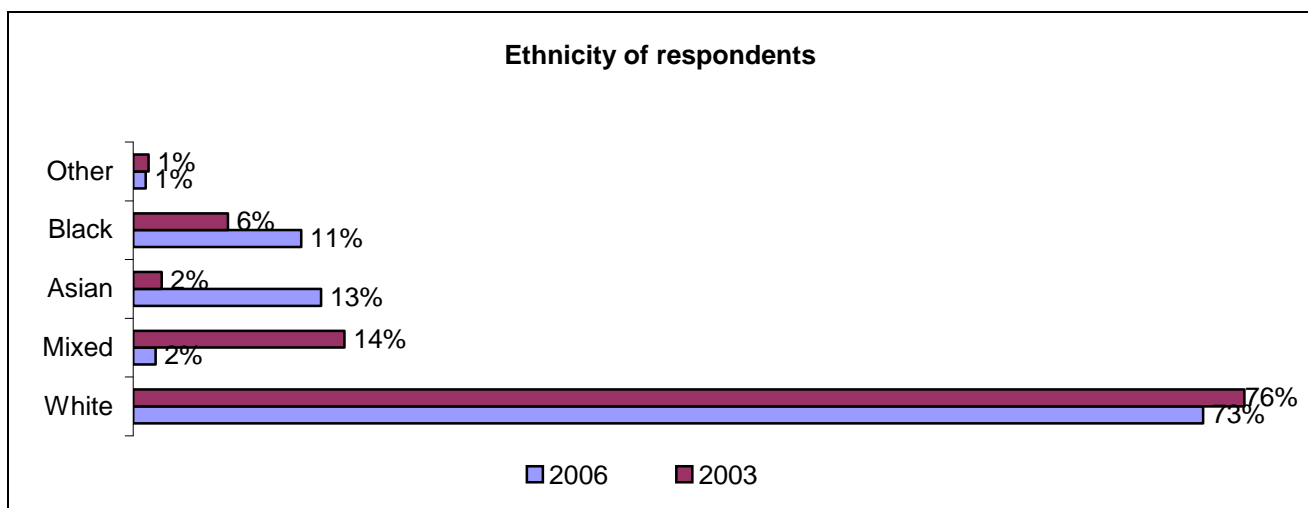
- 48% have lived in their current home for more than 10 years



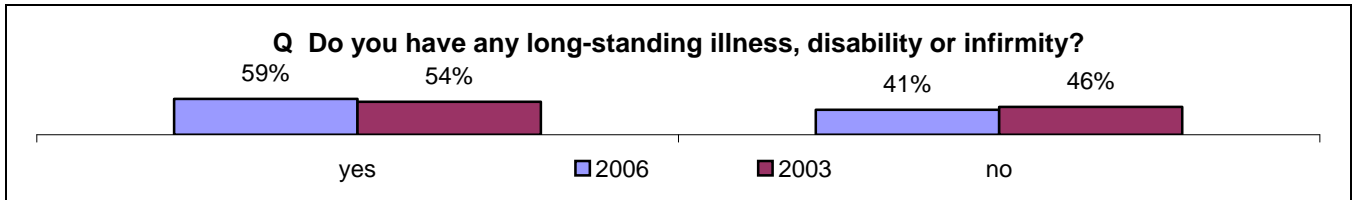
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- The age profile of respondents in 2003 and 2006 is shown in the following chart



- 27% of respondents are BME tenants. This is similar to the last survey in 2003, although the breakdown of ethnic groups has changed



- 48% of respondents are single person households
- 13% are single parent families with children
- 19% of households contained families or at least one child under 16
- 44% of tenant households include someone aged 60 or over
- 59% of respondents have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. Of those over 84% consider this illness or disability to limit their activities in some way



A copy of the full report can be obtained from:

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