

2 April 2014		ITEM: 5
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Developing Resident Key Performance Indicators		
Report of: Dermot Moloney, Strategic Lead Housing		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key	
Accountable Head of Service: Richard Parkin, Head of Housing and Kathryn Adedeji, Head of Housing - Investment and Development		
Accountable Director: Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: Updating on the publication of residents led performance indicators, residents' satisfaction with housing services and neighbourhoods, and giving an update on Thurrock Council Housing Directorate current and future appraisal of residents' satisfaction.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the development of resident friendly performance measurements and to advise on customer satisfaction results.

Co-operation between Housing and the Resident Customer Care group led to the designing and regular publication of accessible and easy to interpret indicators that seeks to transparently and openly reflect an overview of the Housing Directorate's performance.

This report provides a progress update on the initiative and details the latest customer satisfaction scores.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1. That the committee note the contents of the report.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND


KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR RESIDENTS

- 2.1. A close engagement with the Resident Customer Care group resulted in the publication of a set of performance indicators and information for the benefit of Thurrock tenants and residents.
- 2.2. Initially a trial run period of three months, starting from November 2013, led to the development and publication of key performance indicators in two different formats. The first format is a poster-style publication displayed on estate noticeboards. It also was electronically circulated to members and interest groups such as the local Forums. In the second format the indicators are published in a simpler layout on the Local Authority's website (online) in order to reach to a wider audience.
- 2.3. Below is an illustration of indicators published online:

The screenshot shows the Thurrock Council website page titled "Getting involved as a council tenant". The main heading is "Our housing performance". Below this, it states "We regularly publish information about the current status of our housing service." and "December 2013". A "Did you know that:" section lists several achievements:

- since April 2013 we have stopped more than 650 households from becoming homeless
- 100% successful completion rate of properties due for gas and fire alarms checks
- in December, 135 properties were let to current or new tenants
- 69% of our tenants rated Housing services as good or excellent
- more than 500 households have received welfare support and advice from our Financial Inclusion Team
- this year, and as part of our Transforming Homes programme, we have transformed 1,000 homes

 A table follows, comparing performance against targets for the month, year to date, and overall status.

Performance	Target for month	This month	Year to date	Up or down?	Overall
Satisfaction with repairs 	80%	79%	76%	down	work to improve
Percentage of properties let to current tenants (year to date)	—	30%	43%	up	good

- 2.4. These indicators are normally presented in two-parts, a core and a complementary set of information. The core part includes regular important indicators such as the percentage of properties let to tenants, or the level of residents' satisfaction with services provided by Housing. The second part includes interesting and useful informative indicators such as the average waiting time for a specific type, or size of property, or the number of households waiting to be housed.

2.5. Below is an illustration of the of the poster-style indicators.

Our Housing Performance

In December...

Indicator	December's Target	Dec.	Year to date	Direction of travel	Overall
Satisfaction with repairs	80%	79%	78%	↓	☹
Percentage of properties let to current tenants	-	30%	43%	↑	😊
Number of complaints received	67	83	633	↓	☹
Average re-letting time for properties	35	34	-	↓	😊
Number of illegally occupied properties recovered	5	7	36	↑	☹
Level of Rent Collection	97%	-	97.45%	↑	😊

Did you know that...

Since April 2013 the Council has stopped more than **650** households from becoming homeless

100% Successful completion rate of properties due Gas & Fire alarms checks.

In December **135** properties were let to current or new tenants.

69% of our tenants rated Housing services as good or excellent.

More than **500** households have received welfare support and advice from our Financial Inclusion Team.

This year, and as part of our Transforming Homes Program, we have transformed **1000** homes.

2.6. The initial feedback from residents, tenant representative groups, and housing officers indicates a very positive reception of these publications.

“As part of the Customer Care Panel, we worked with Housing, leaseholders and tenants to produce something simple; to provide what we viewed as relevant information which we hoped would be useful and informative.

These were questions we had asked as residents, so must be useful to other residents.”

Gemma Riddle
March 2014

The publication of resident led indicators achieves various objectives such as:

- Commitment to service excellence by producing open and transparent set of indicators.
- Providing residents with an operational insight of services provided by the Housing Directorate.

- Meeting and managing expectations of residents' needs by publicising important data such as typical waiting times to secure permanent alternative accommodation.
 - Raising awareness of Housing services among residents by indicating lesser known but crucially important services such as the financial inclusion and downsizing.
- 2.7. At the completion of the initial three month trial period, it has been deemed more appropriate and opportune to continue with this initiative on a quarterly basis to be published at the end of each quarter. This is so residents can have a better overview appreciation of the directorate performance. It is also operationally more practical to produce particularly in the case of updating noticeboards.
- 2.8. The natural progression of this initiative will endeavour to develop a resident/officer engagement task and finish group; such arrangements will explore, consider, and consult on specific issues and matters relevant to tenants and services provided such an introduction or evaluation of the merits of service, policy, or procedural process.

RESIDENTS SATISFACTION

- 2.9. Housing extensively surveys residents' views. The surveys are run by an independent company called KWEST which contacts residents and discuss their satisfaction with services. This approach delivers a high level of transparency and objectivity in the data collected and as such gives confidence and consistency to the results of the survey.
- 2.10. The process of surveying residents views is outlined in a cohort of five surveys, four of which are already set in place and operational:
1. Tenants' general satisfaction with services provided.
 2. Satisfaction with repairs services.
 3. New tenants satisfaction with services provided.
 4. Tenants' satisfaction with *Transforming Homes* programme.
 5. Satisfaction with responses to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues.
- 2.11. It is anticipated to introduce a specific survey in the first quarter of this financial year (2014-15) that explicitly assess tenants' level of satisfaction with their neighbourhood, and how Housing deals with reports of noise, nuisance, and anti-social behaviour.

2.12. Housing has adopted from the start a dialogue approach with tenants surveyed. Tenants are given the opportunity to receive a call-back from their Estate Officers to discuss matters further if they wish so.

General Customer Satisfaction Survey

2.13. Since the launch of this set of surveys, over 18% of Thurrock residents have had the opportunity to feedback and express their views about Housing services and their general level of satisfaction. Surveys are carried out regularly and in a timely profiled manner, so to ensure consistency in the results received. The service aims to make contacts with regards to general satisfaction with about 5% of tenants each quarter. Thus, information provided below reports on results from 1500 surveys carried out in the first three quarters of the year.

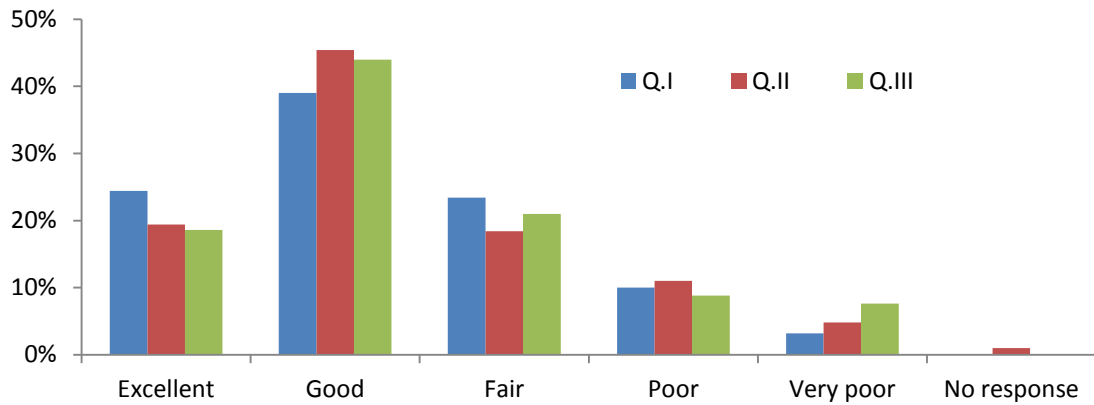
2.14. Tenants overall satisfaction with the service has been consistent throughout the year; it is currently at 68%, for those who have rated the service as excellent or good.

Housing aims to increase residents’ satisfaction with service provided in the coming year through:

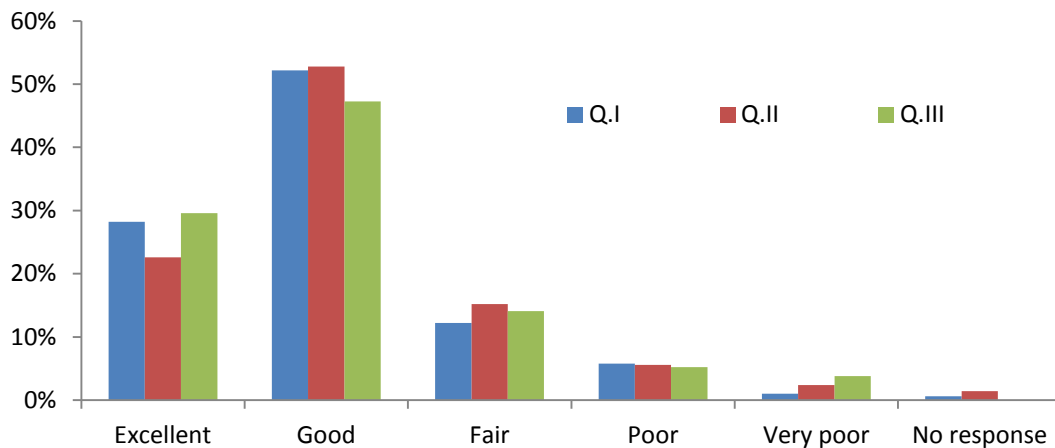
- a) Better engagement measures to understand the areas of dissatisfaction
- b) Continuous service improvements & delivery of a resilient repairs service
- c) Investing further in the quality of homes via the Transforming Homes programme.



2.15. Residents’ satisfaction with the quality of homes is currently at the rate of 65%. The extensive investment programme in our assets is likely to increase the level of residents’ satisfaction.

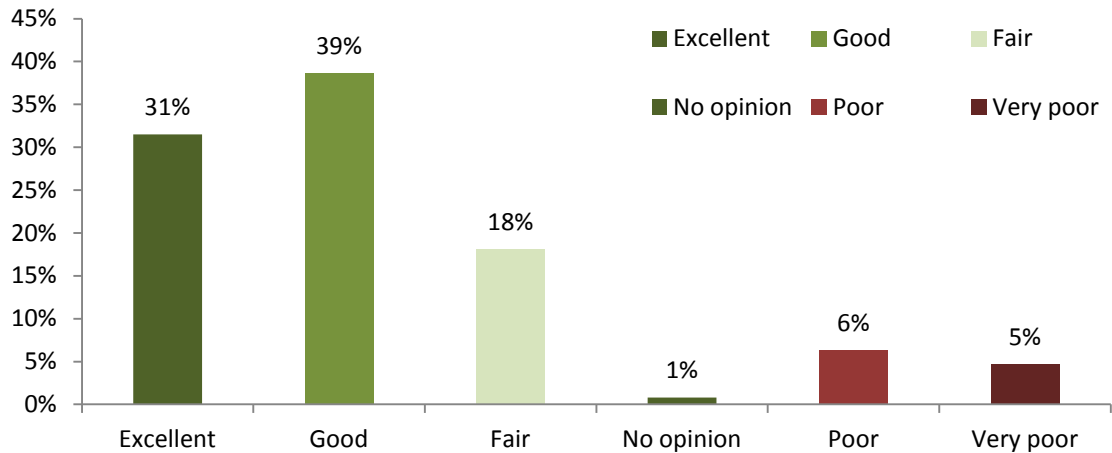


It is positively welcomed that the level of residents' satisfaction with their neighbourhood, it is currently at 78%.

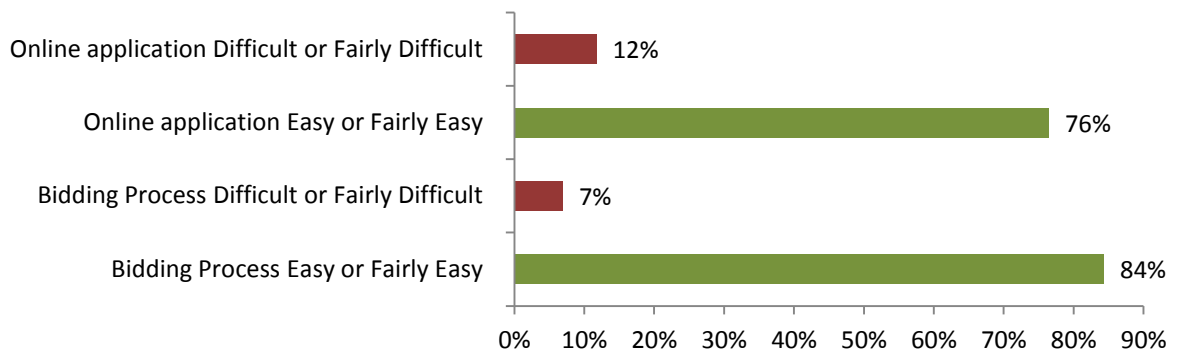


New Tenants Satisfaction Survey

- 2.16. The New Tenants Satisfaction survey was started in December 2013, and as its name suggests, seeks to understand the level of satisfaction among those tenants who have recently secured council accommodation. New tenants are surveyed on their experience regarding the process from bidding through to their initial impressions as a new Thurrock Council tenant.
- 2.17. A very high percentage of new tenants are overall satisfied with the process of getting a new home, this includes both tenants who are new to Thurrock Council and those who have transferred from a Thurrock Council property or a Thurrock property owned by a Registered Provider.

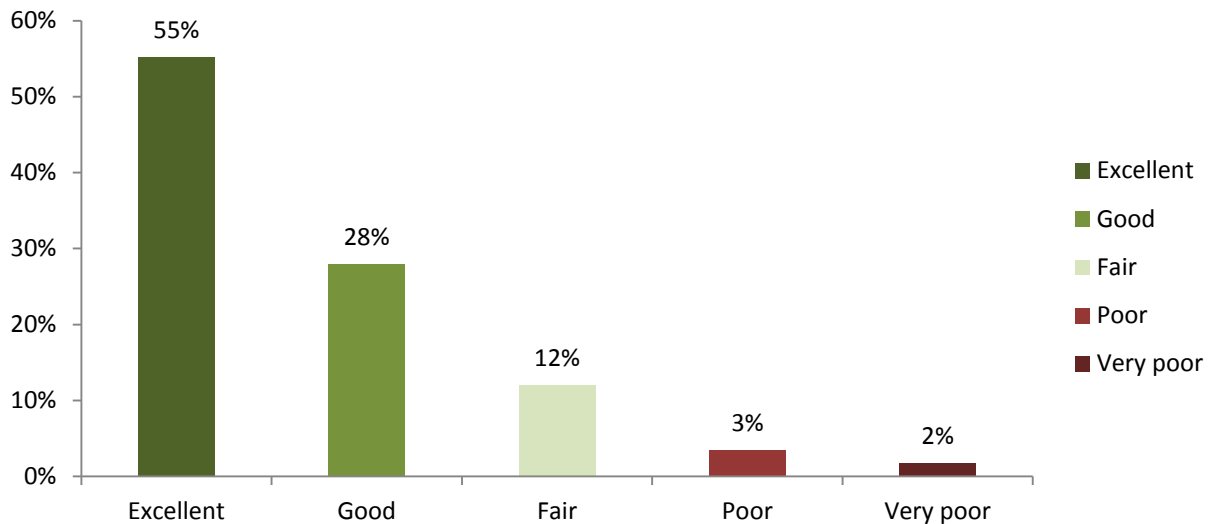


2.18. Most new tenants surveyed have found the online Housing Application Form easy or fairly easy to use at 78% and about 12% rated it as difficult or fairly difficult to use. This can be viewed positively as we launched a new application process last May. New tenants found the bidding process to be easy to use, with 84% rated it as easy or fairly easy.



2.19. Housing Estate Officers and Rent & Welfare Officers visit new tenants in the first few weeks of the latter becoming tenants.

The vast majority of new tenants have rated their Housing Estate Officer positively with only a small percentage rating officers negatively at about 5%. Also about 85% of new tenants stated that the council provided enough information during the letting process.



New tenants are generally satisfied with their Estate Officers visits

2.20. Issues experienced by new tenants are often related to the quality of their new home; 55% of the tenants rated the quality of their new home as excellent or good.

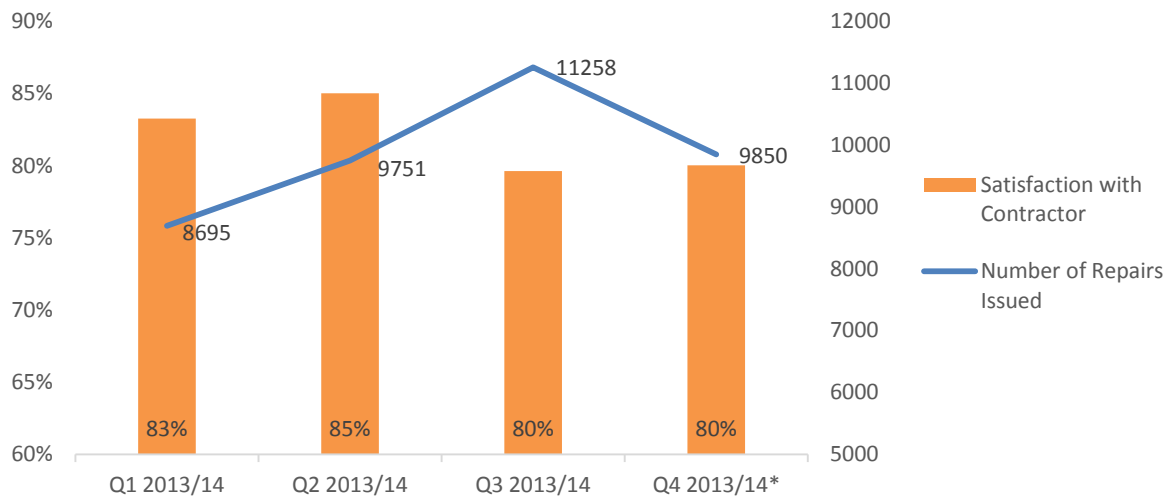
Tenants Satisfaction with the Repairs Service

2.21. The level of satisfaction with the repairs services has vastly improved since 2012/13 and in seven of the eleven months the last financial year (2013-14), satisfaction with the quality of repairs has exceeded the target of 80%.



2.22. Residents have also generally been satisfied with the level of service provided by the contractor managing the repairs service. In each quarter of the financial year over 80% of residents have rated the service of the contractor as good or excellent.

2.23. The charts above and below show a dip in satisfaction levels in quarters 3 and 4 year 2013/14. This broadly correlates to the increase that has occurred in repairs demand in these quarters.

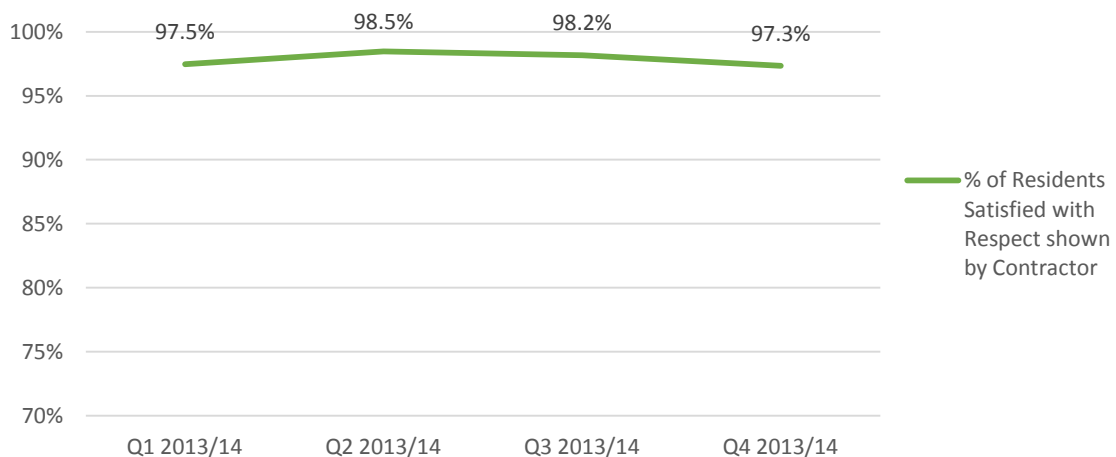


*Please note: Q4 13/14 covers just the two months of repairs (Jan & Feb)

2.24. There has been a vast increase in the volume of repairs in the two most recent quarters. More repairs have been issued in Q4 2013/14 than in either of the first two quarters of the year, despite a month remaining in this period.

2.25. The rise in repairs demand has caused associated declines in satisfaction. This is because despite the contractor still completing the same proportion of repairs in target timeframes, the number of residents who have had to wait to have their repairs completed was greater than in either of the first two quarters.

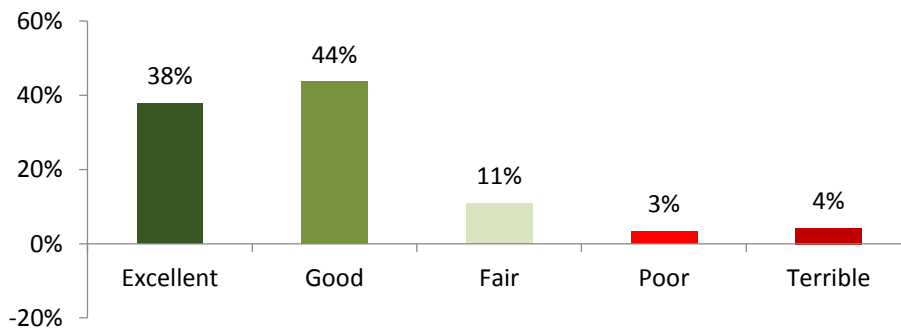
2.26. Another key satisfaction area with the repairs service is the level of respect shown by the contractor to tenants and their homes. In each quarter of the fiscal year, over 97% of residents surveyed have been happy with the level of respect and care shown by the contractor.



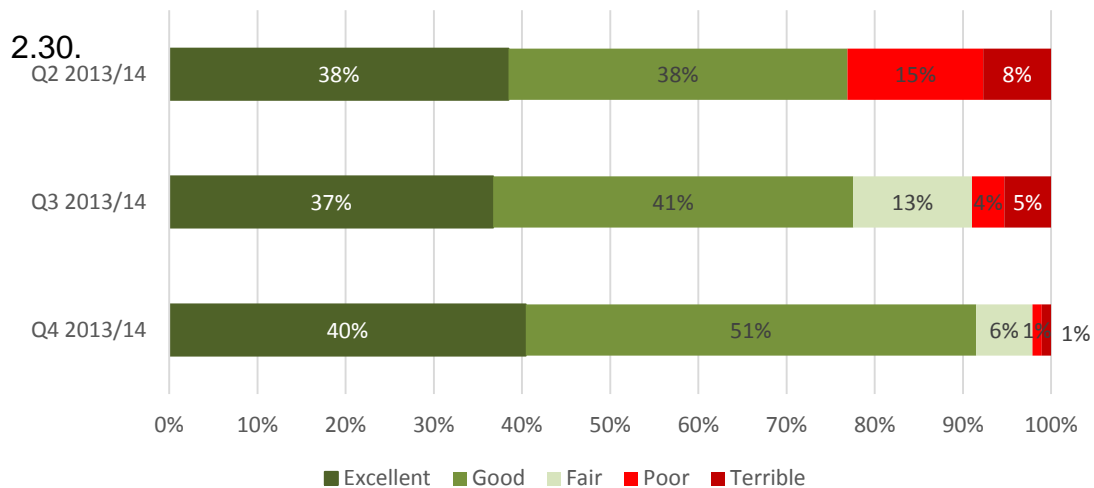
Tenants Satisfaction with Transforming Homes

2.27. In November 2013, a Transforming Homes satisfaction survey was introduced to evaluate and seek tenants' feedback on the programme and the improvements being made to their homes. To date the results have been extremely positive and have improved consistently since the programme started.

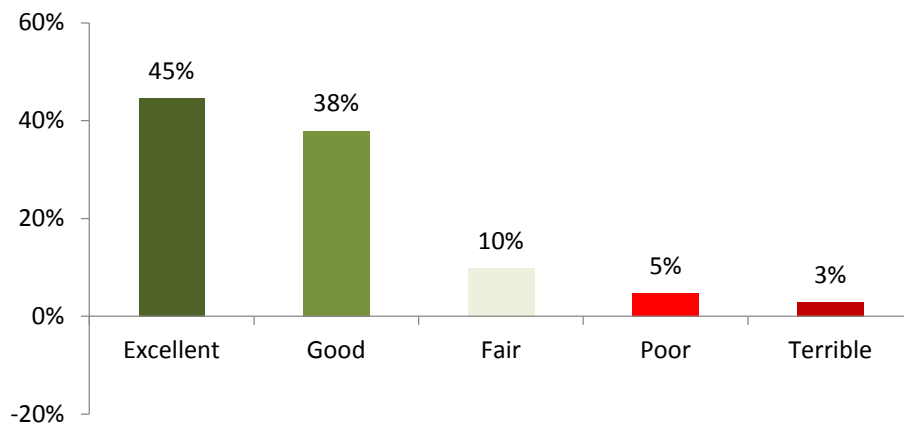
2.28. Year to date 82% of tenants have rated the overall service provided by Thurrock Council during the Transforming Homes works as excellent or good.



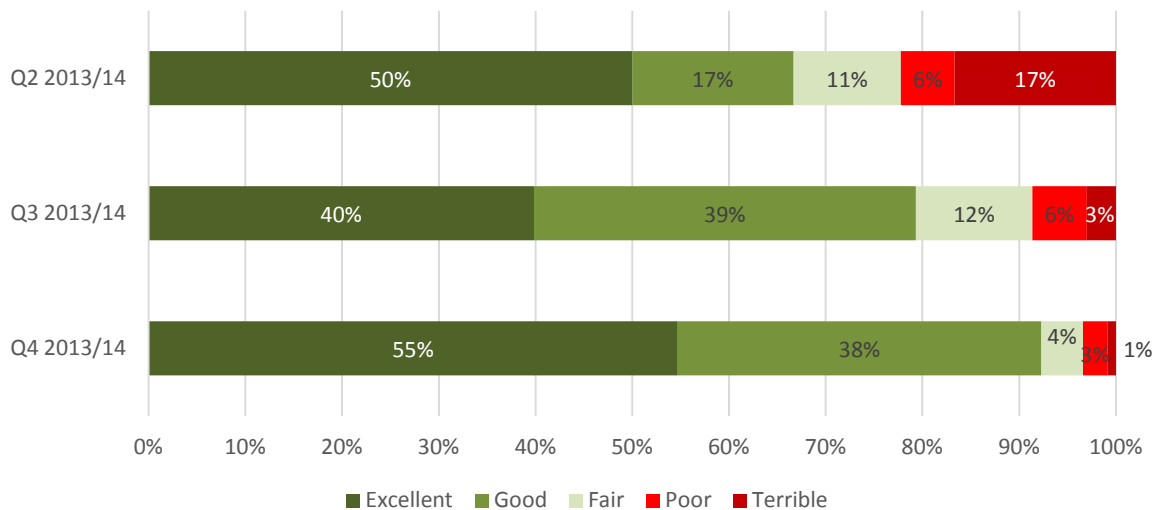
2.29. There have been quarterly increases in the proportion of residents rating the service of Thurrock as excellent or good. In Q2 2013/14, 77% of resident rated Thurrock Council as excellent or good, by Q4 2013/14 this had risen to 91%.



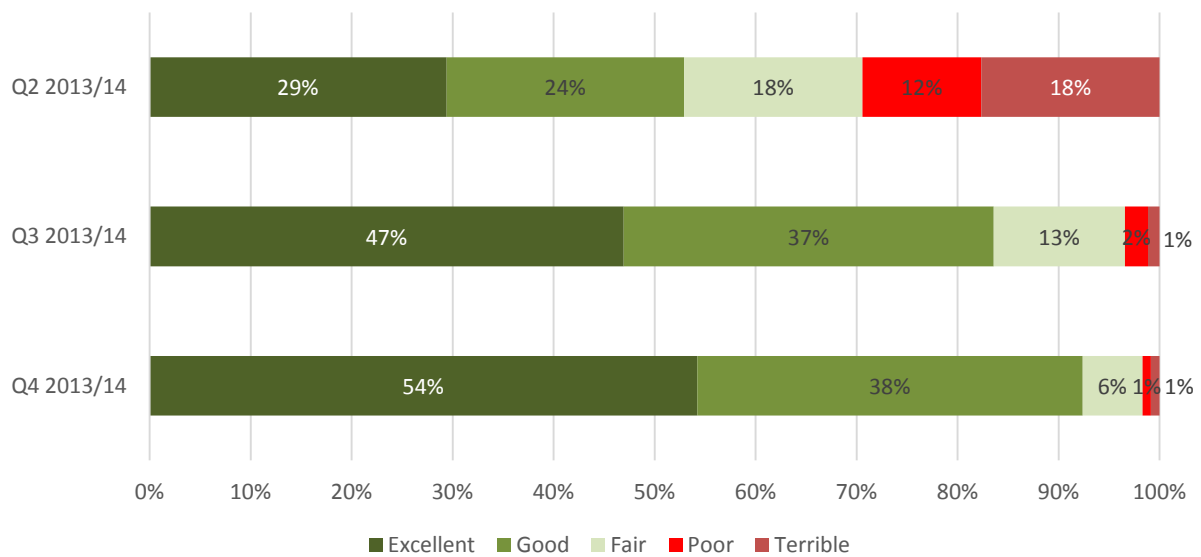
2.30. Overall year to date 83% of tenants' surveyed have rated the quality and standards of works as excellent or good.



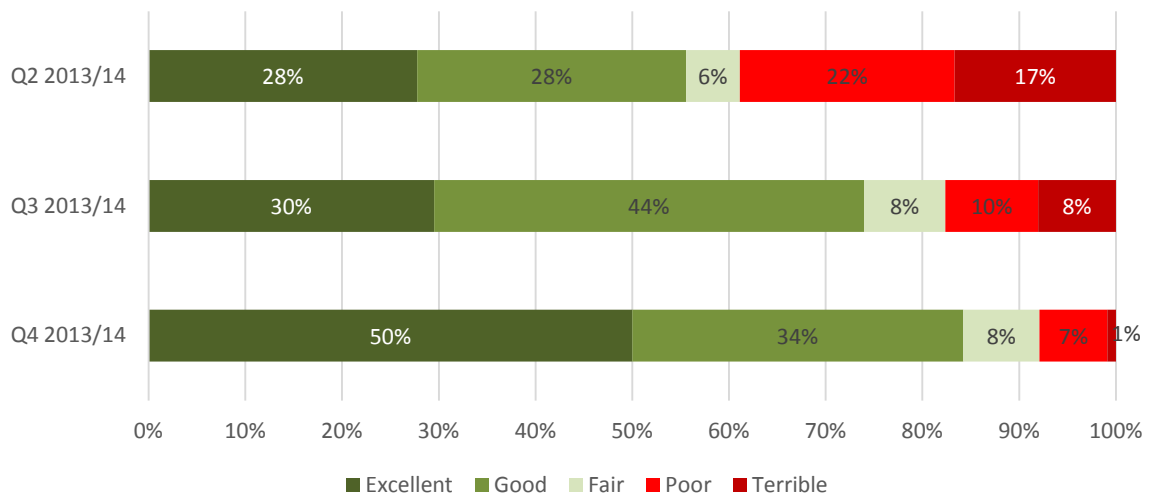
2.31. For properties completed in the first quarter of the programme (Q2 2013/14), 67% of resident surveyed rated the quality of works as excellent or good. In comparison, in the last quarter, 92% of resident's surveyed rated the standard of works as excellent or good.



2.32. Satisfaction with the politeness of staff has increased from 53% in the first quarter of the programme (Q2 13/14), to 92% in the most recent quarter.



2.33. The same trend is evident for the meeting of work timescales, which has increased by 28 percentage points from Q2 13/14 to Q4 13/14. This is once more due to the new procedures the Council has put in place throughout the programme.



2.34. The Housing department is committed to driving continuous improvement and providing an excellent level of service and works to residents. Since the programme commenced, a number of processes to assist with improving the quality of customer-care residents experience have been implemented. These enhancements include;

- Email alerts being dispatched to contractors to inform them when residents are not satisfied with the service they have received. Contractors are subsequently required to feedback how they dealt with these issues at the monthly governance meeting.
- Developing detailed action plans for contractor’s whose performance slips. This has assisted with the vast improvements made by certain contractors in recent months. These plans have developed strategies to enhance the daily interaction residents have with staff during the

works, and have included: English lessons for site-operates to improve their communication skills, increased involvement of Resident Liaison Officers and quicker turnaround times to complete the works.

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Report intended to update members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Not applicable

5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 6.1 This continued approach aims to be responsive and reflective to Thurrock Council tenants and reflective to their needs and aspirations.
- 6.2 At its core it seeks to build pride among tenants with their Housing services, along with responsibility and respect on part of the latter, create safer communities by identifying and addressing gaps in the service, with the ultimate effort to pursue safer, cleaner, and greener homes and neighbourhoods.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jo Beard**
Telephone and email: **01375 652598**
jbeard@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no financial implications; this report is for update purposes only.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart – Principal Solicitor**
Telephone and email: **01375 652040**
alison.stuart@bdlegal.org.uk

The report is for noting and there are no legal implications at this time.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Telephone and email: **01375652930**
rprice@thurrock.gov.uk

This report carries information on the engagement of a wide cross-sector of Thurrock Council's tenants to inform the publication of resident key performance indicators. It also establishes the media used to promote and inform the wider tenant community on these indicators with some suggestions for future engagement and mechanisms to explore, consider, and consult on specific issues and matters relevant to tenants and housing services. A residents/officers engagement task and finish group may be established in the future and is expected to be representative of the diversity of Thurrock Council's tenants. There are no further or specific diversity or equality implications otherwise arising from this update to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- None

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