

FOCUS ON ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR & ESTATE MANAGEMENT



TENANTS SATISFACTION RESULTS

In October and November 2018 we carried out our Tenants Satisfaction Survey and 1034 tenants took the time to tell us what they think of us as a landlord and give us ideas on how we could improve.

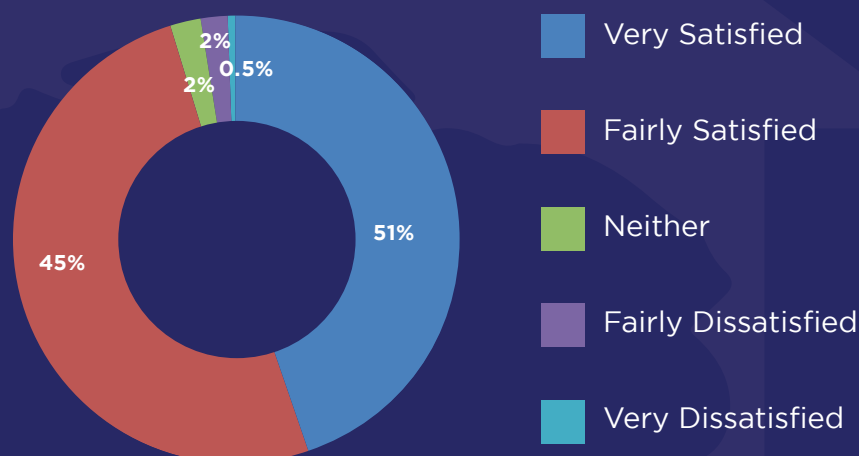
Overall we were delighted with the results. Since the previous survey in 2016, we have seen improvements in some areas, others have stayed the same and only a few were poorer than before.

We always want to take the opportunity to improve and this piece of work gives us valuable information.

The focus of this Newsletter is Estate Management and Anti-Social Behaviour and we decided to have a separate newsletter on this topic because of some of the comments made in the Survey.

Below are some of the questions that referred to our tenants' neighbourhood:

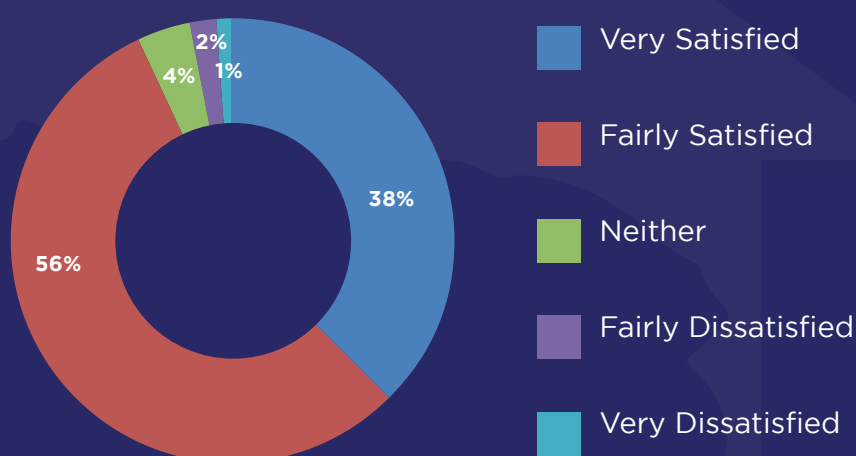
Q42 - 987 TENANTS REPORTED THAT THEY WERE EITHER VERY SATISFIED OR FAIRLY SATISFIED, GIVING US A SATISFACTION RATING OF 95.5%



We asked the 47 tenants who were not satisfied a further question – ***“If you are not satisfied can you explain why you say this?”*** The results were:

| Number of Tenants | Reason |
|-------------------|--|
| 22 | Anti-social behaviour, noise or problems with neighbours |
| 20 | Drug use or drug dealing |
| 5 | No specific reason was given |

Q43 - 970 TENANTS REPORTED THAT THEY WERE EITHER VERY SATISFIED OR FAIRLY SATISFIED, GIVING US A SATISFACTION RATING OF 93.8%



We asked the 64 tenants who were not satisfied a further question - ***“Can you explain why you are not satisfied with your landlord’s management of the neighbourhood?”***

The results were

| Number of Tenants | Reason |
|-------------------|---|
| 25 | Believe that the Association should “vet” their tenants before offering housing |
| 15 | Problem experienced with backcourts, litter, bins or parking |
| 9 | Problems with anti-social behaviour |
| 6 | Problems with drugs |
| 9 | No specific reason was given |

We were very pleased to note that only 11% of our tenants had experienced anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood or estate in the last 12 months. Almost 75% of them had reported it to the Association and 55% were satisfied with how the Association dealt with the complaint.

Of those who had experienced anti-social behaviour, 40 tenants (35%) had also contacted other agencies. The Police featured most highly followed by the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation Team and the Community Wardens. In some cases all these agencies were involved.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the survey, your comments really help us.

TENANTS SELECTION PROCESS

Nearly 40% of tenants who completed our survey said they were not satisfied with Oak Tree's management of their neighbourhood, and said that they thought the Association should vet new tenants before offering them housing.

The Association wants all our new tenants to settle into their new property and make it their home. We want to keep our tenants and we hope they will stay with us for a long time and become part of their new community.

There is a process in place to check an applicant's previous tenancy history and we do this whenever we can.

Our application form asks for details of all previous addresses in the last 5 years and if the applicant had a tenancy with another landlord then the Association will request a tenancy reference from that landlord.

If the reference highlights a concern about any of the following, then the application may be suspended and an offer of housing withdrawn:

- Arrears
- Rechargeable repairs
- Anti-Social behaviour
- Condition of property
- Other breach of tenancy

More detailed information on what can be taken into consideration and the level of arrears etc are contained in the Joint Allocations Policy that operates between Oak Tree HA, Cloch HA and Larkfield HA.

Applications which are suspended from receiving offers will be regularly reviewed and applicants will be informed in writing of the reason for the suspension, any steps they can

take to remove the suspension and their right of appeal.

If an applicant gives us false information or withholds relevant information in order to increase their chances of housing they will have their application suspended for 1 year and any offer of housing cancelled.

If the false or misleading information is discovered after a tenancy has been granted we will take action to re-possess the property on breach of tenancy ground.

Some people who apply to us for rehousing have never had a tenancy before and this means we cannot obtain a tenancy reference.



CANNABIS USE IN ASSOCIATION PROPERTIES

Unfortunately, there has been a recent increase in complaints about the smell of cannabis from properties and also in gardens and common closes.

It is illegal to possess, distribute, sell or grow Cannabis in the UK.

Being caught with cannabis comes with a maximum of five years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both. Being convicted of producing and supplying the Class-B drug carries up to 14 years behind bars, an unlimited fine, or both.

Police can issue a warning or on-the-spot fine if you're caught with a small amount - generally less than one ounce - if it is deemed for personal use.

If you suspect your neighbours are smoking cannabis (or similar) in their house you have the right to contact the police. This could mean that the Police will call at the property and it could result in a search of their property if the officers share your suspicions.

They could be charged if they are found to be in possession of cannabis if the Police felt it was appropriate.

It's completely illegal to smoke drugs anywhere in Britain - including on your own property or in your own home.

The Association will always pass on any information received to the Police and we strongly encourage neighbours to do the same if they have concerns about illegal drug use. You can call the Police on **101** or Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

It is clear that taking illegal drugs is a breach of tenancy and if the Association can obtain sufficient evidence of the breach, then legal action will be taken.

Oak Tree HA's Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement contains the following clauses that relate to drug use:

3. You must not use or allow the house to be used for illegal or immoral purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: having controlled drugs in the house; You must not carry out any act in the house or in the neighbourhood which may lead to a criminal conviction against you or any member of the household or persons visiting the property.

3.3 In particular you, those living with you, and your visitors must not:

- use your house, or allow it to be used, for illegal or immoral purposes;
- loiter or cause nuisance in any open space within the neighbourhood;
- use or sell unlawful drugs or sell alcohol.

3.4 In addition, you, those living with you, and your visitors must not do the following in an anti-social way:

- use drugs or alcohol.

Tenants whose tenancy began on or after 1 May 2019, have the same clause as above but it is also specifically mentioned that it is a breach of tenancy to grow drugs.



DOGS TRUST EVENT

We were delighted to work alongside the Dogs Trust and help host a Responsible Dog Ownership Roadshow event at Branchton Community Centre on Tuesday 19 March 2019.

We had a fantastic turnout and the staff who attended enjoyed meeting the 63 dogs who came along with their owners. We had 17 different breeds of dogs ranging in size from an English Mastiff to a Chihuahua.

The aim of this Roadshow was to allow the Dogs Trust to address dog-related problems, deliver general awareness campaigns, work within communities, gather baseline data and carry out monitoring and evaluation on a wide range of issues that directly impact on the welfare of dogs across Scotland.

By working together they are able to promote all aspects of responsible dog ownership including:

- The change in the law regarding compulsory microchipping.
- The legal requirement of keeping the microchip owner information up to date.
- The legal requirement for collar and tag.
- The legal requirement to pick up after your dog.
- The importance of proper training/ socialisation to prevent anti-social behaviour.
- How to be safe around dogs.
- The importance of the five freedoms (Freedom from hunger and thirst; discomfort; pain, injury or disease; fear and distress and freedom to express normal behaviour.)



On the day, the Dogs Trust Veterinary Nurse was able to offer free microchipping, nail clipping and carry out a general assessment of a dogs health and where appropriate advise owners if they should visit their vet.

The team were also on hand to provide health & wellbeing advice including promoting the importance of:

- Taking out pet insurance
- Registering with a vet
- Neutering
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Recognising signs of ill health
- Regular flea/worm treatment
- Annual vaccinations
- Regular dental checks

The Association promotes responsible dog ownership in the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement. We ask tenants to complete a dog registration form so we can keep track of which dogs are where and we provide dog waste bags free of charge on request.



ESTATE MANAGEMENT COMPLAINTS 2018-19

During the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 the Association received 126 formal estate management complaints. 96 of the complaints were category 1 (basic complaints), 22 were category 2 (more serious or repeated complaints) and 8 were category 3 (complex) complaints in the period. A further 57 informal complaints were logged in the year but they were dealt with at an early stage and they did not progress to formal complaints.

| Category of complaint | Apr to Jun 2018 | Jul to Sept 2018 | Oct to Dec 2018 | Jan to Mar 2018 | Total |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|
| Category 1 (target 1 month) | 21 | 28 | 17 | 30 | 96 |
| Category 2 (target 2 months) | 4 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 22 |
| Category 3 (target 6 months) | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Total | 28 | 35 | 23 | 40 | 126 |

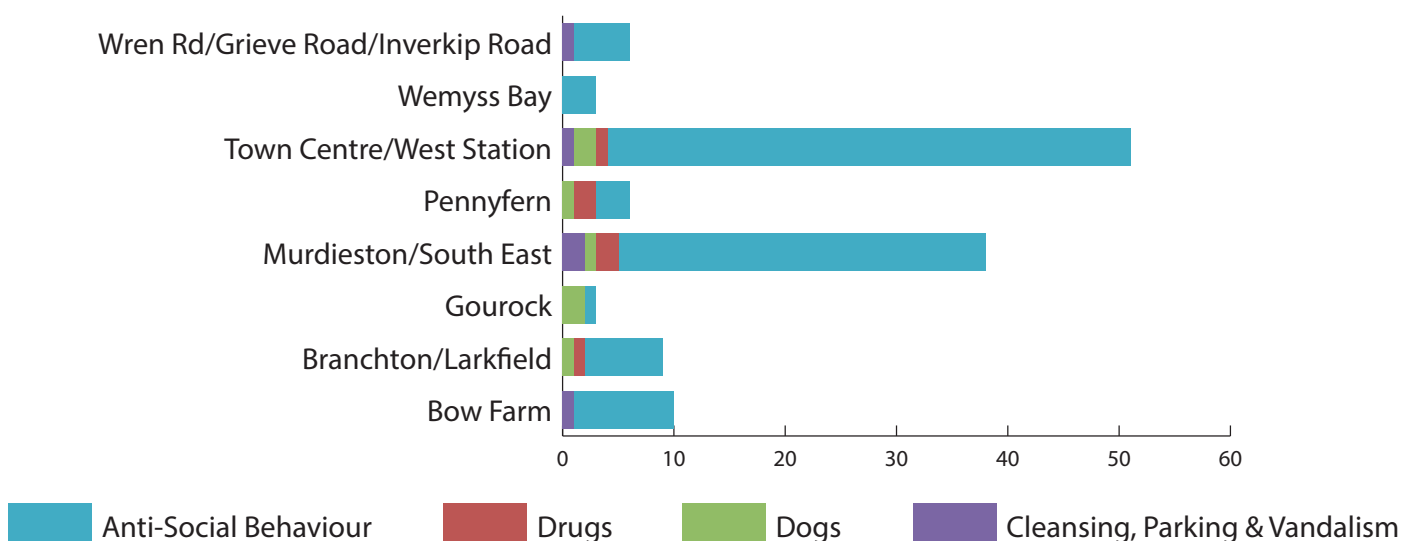
The busiest periods were July to September 2018 and January to March 2018.

The most common reason for complaints are nuisance behaviour from neighbours. This can be parties, noise, rowdy visitors or the behaviour of children.

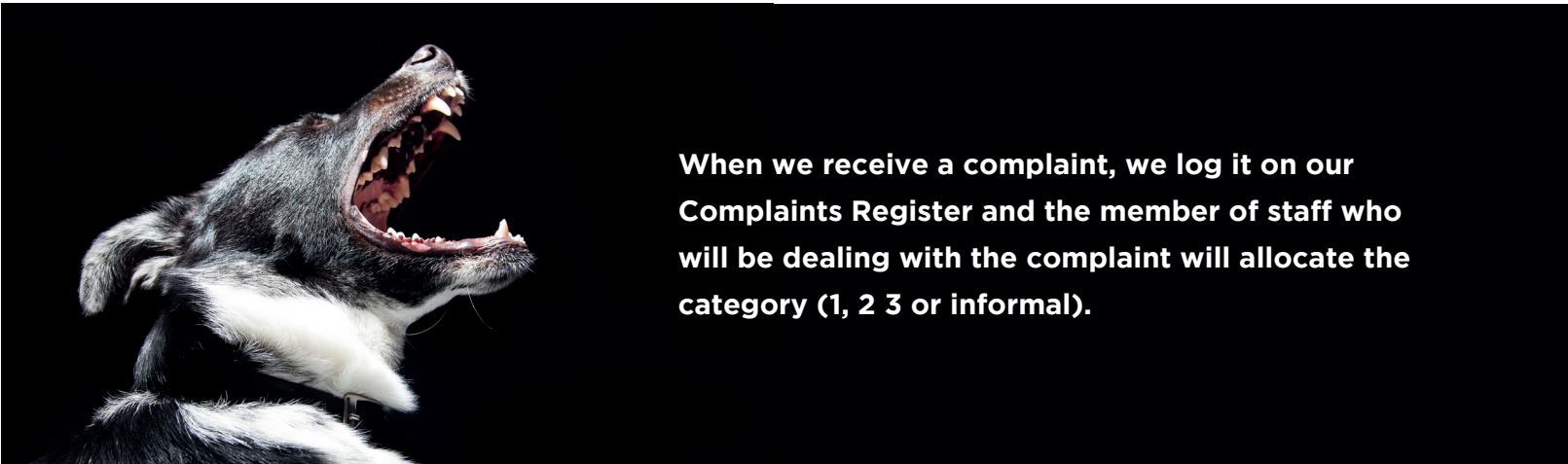
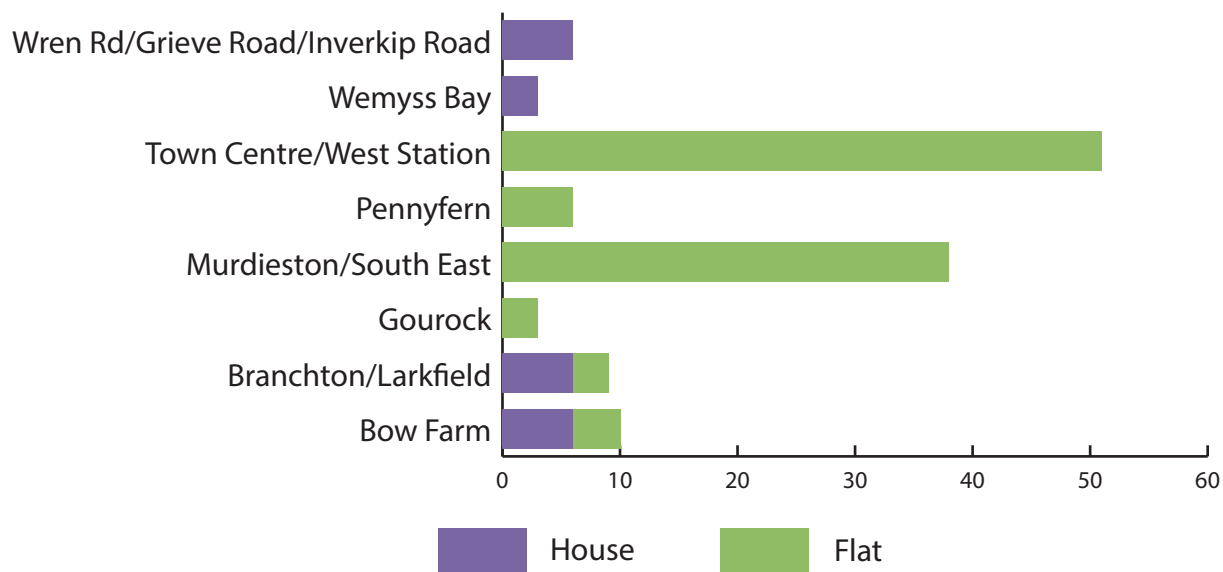
As you might expect, people who live in flats tend to experience more problems with anti-social behaviour and neighbour problems than those that live in houses.

Here are some charts that show the type of complaints that we received in the year, the area that the tenants who made the complaint live in and the type of property they live in.

TYPE OF COMPLAINT BY AREA



COMPLAINTS BY HOUSE TYPE AND AREA



As well as making contact with the person that the complaint is about, we will try and find out as much information as we can about the complaint. This might mean visiting the close (if it is a flat), speaking to neighbours or contacting the Police, the wardens or any other agency who might be involved.

We will do our best to speak to the person the complaint is about face to face. This is to give them an opportunity to tell us what happened.

We try and resolve complaints quickly and effectively. This isn't always possible and some complaints can be very difficult to deal with and take a long time to resolve.



Inverclyde Council offers a free Community Mediation service for anyone residing in the Inverclyde area regardless of home ownership/tenancy.

WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Community mediation is a positive way for people in conflict to find practical solutions to their difficulties. Mediation can help if you are experiencing difficulties with a next door neighbour or a neighbour in your street.

WHO ARE THE MEDIATORS AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

Mediators are trained officers who will listen to all sides involved in a dispute and act in an impartial manner. They do not suggest solutions or dispute the facts; they help you prepare for a mediation meeting. Their aim is to help neighbours communicate and resolve the situation.

HOW DOES IT HELP?

- Mediation is a chance for you to voice your concerns and listen to how your neighbour feels as well.
- It offers neighbours a chance to stay on good terms with each other and is about coming to an agreement that both you and your neighbour can live with.
- Mediation is voluntary so each neighbour is aware that the other is willing to move forward.
- Neighbours get to decide their own outcome.

HOW DO I CONTACT THE SERVICE?

If you would like more information about community mediation please contact your housing officer or the service on:

Telephone: 01475 715922

Email: community.mediation@inverclyde.gov.uk

Webpage: www.inverclyde.gov.uk/mediation (online form via webpage)

Inverclyde Council Community Mediation Service is an approved Community Mediation provider under the Scottish Community Mediation Network's Service Accreditation Scheme.

COMMUNITY WARDEN SERVICE

Inverclyde Council Community Warden Service provides a visible and reassuring presence to the community. They are responsible for reducing anti-social behaviour, crime and the fear of crime. They improve environmental quality by offering advice to members of the community and reporting suspicious incidents to partner agencies.

Community Wardens are operational from 13:00hrs to 23:30hrs and should be contacted on **0800 01 317 01** when incidents of antisocial behaviour are occurring. An answering machine is available if the line is busy.

If you wish to speak to an antisocial behaviour investigator (Social Protection Team) to discuss your options or ask for advice they can be contacted between 09:00hrs and 17:00hrs on **01475 714204**.

EVICCTIONS FOR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR 2018-19

The Association rarely needs to take legal action for anti-social behaviour because most complaints about neighbours can be resolved at an earlier stage.

However, in the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 the Association evicted 4 tenants because of anti-social behaviour alone and a further 2 tenants were evicted because of anti-social behaviour and rent arrears.

The Association will not “name and shame” tenants who are evicted for this reason as it not only identifies them but it could cause embarrassment to the other tenants who live in that area.

We do want to take this opportunity to thank those tenants who made complaints and in some cases were prepared to appear in court to tell the Sheriff how their neighbour’s behaviour had affected them.

If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour and the Association is taking legal action against the tenant, we will ask for your co-operation and we hope that you will be prepared to appear in court.

We also know that this isn’t something that everyone wants to do and we understand that. That is why we make the best use of other agencies such as the Anti-Social Behaviour Investigation team and the Community Wardens. They can witness the behaviour and appear at court.

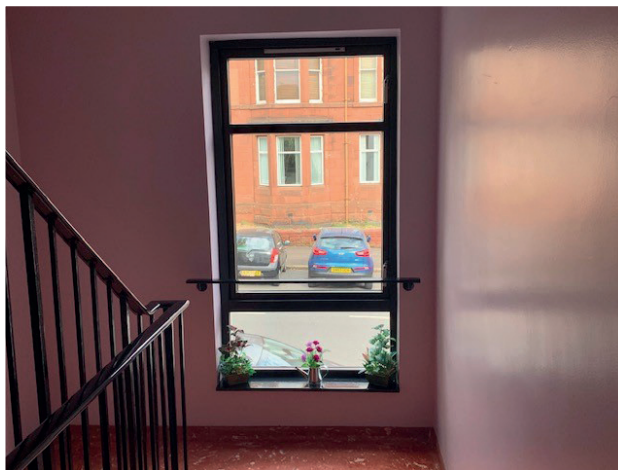
TOP TEN CLOSES

All our common closes are inspected at least once every quarter. A full inspection of the stairs, landings, windows, bin stores and backcourts takes place. Staff will highlight closes that need attention (stairs cleaned, rubbish removed etc) and let the residents know what needs to be done. This could be by card or letter or we may try and speak to the resident there and then.

Most of our properties are kept in excellent condition and no action is needed. We want to highlight our good properties and applaud the tenants who take great care to look after their close and take pride in its appearance.

This will be a feature in future newsletters so look out for your close in future. Our Housing team have been asked to take photos of their favourite closes in their patch.

Here are a few to start us off:





FEEDBACK



We would love to know what your experience of Anti-Social Behaviour and how Oak Tree deals with Estate Management Issues.

Not everyone took part in the Tenants Satisfaction Survey so we didn't get every single tenant's views.

Please use this section to give us any comments or suggestions on how we could improve our service to you.

Name:

Address:

Contact number:

Email address:

Comments or suggestions:

Thank you.