

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 6 November 2013

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**(For all Enquiries)** (01753) 875436

**WARD(S):** All

**PORTFOLIO:** Councillor James Swindlehurst – Commissioner for Neighbourhoods and Renewal

### **PART I**

## **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

### **STAR SURVEY 2013**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The STAR survey is the standard survey used by social landlords to gauge residents' satisfaction with the services they provide. A standard set of core questions can be supplemented by selecting additional questions from a range of themes to allow data to be benchmarked against the performance of other, similar, social housing providers.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide the panel with a summary of resident feedback from the recently completed STAR survey.

#### **2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

- 2.1 The panel is requested to note the report and make comment as necessary.

#### **3. Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

- Economy and Skills
- Health and Wellbeing
- Regeneration and Environment
- Housing
- Safer Communities

Good quality housing is essential to health and wellbeing. Working together with the community increases our understanding of local issues and concerns ensuring we are better placed to respond to local needs to create and maintain safe, attractive neighbourhoods and communities for residents to live in.

**Civic responsibility and improving the image of the town** – The Housing Service champions the needs of Slough’s diverse community; by offering a range of different ways to get involved in helping to shape services and communities we are demonstrating that taking an active part in their community can make a real difference, improving neighbourhoods, communities and the town as a whole.

#### 4. Other Implications

##### (a) Financial

The cost of the recent STAR survey (£20,000) was covered by existing funds within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It is anticipated that a sample survey will be repeated annually to test resident satisfaction in order to inform priorities and drive continuous improvement activities.

##### (b) Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
Legal	None	None
Property	The STAR survey tests resident satisfaction with the quality of their home which offers the opportunity to test the condition of the council's housing stock.	None
Human Rights	None	None
Health and Safety	None	None
Employment Issues	None	None
Equalities Issues	None	None
Community Support	The survey offers tenants and leaseholders the opportunity to express their views. Feedback will be used to inform the development of improvement plans and establishing local priorities.	None
Communications	None	None
Community Safety	The survey offers residents the opportunity to comment on the quality of their neighbourhood. Feedback will be used to inform decisions and the development of improvement plans.	None
Financial	None	None
Timetable for Delivery	None	None
Project Capacity	None	None
Other	Surveys were coded so that all feedback could be analysed at Ward level. Reports were produced	None

	based on the current wards and the new wards from 2014. The data will be used to inform Ward profiles which, in turn, will inform decisions and the allocation of resources to address local issues and concerns.	
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(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications in relation to this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

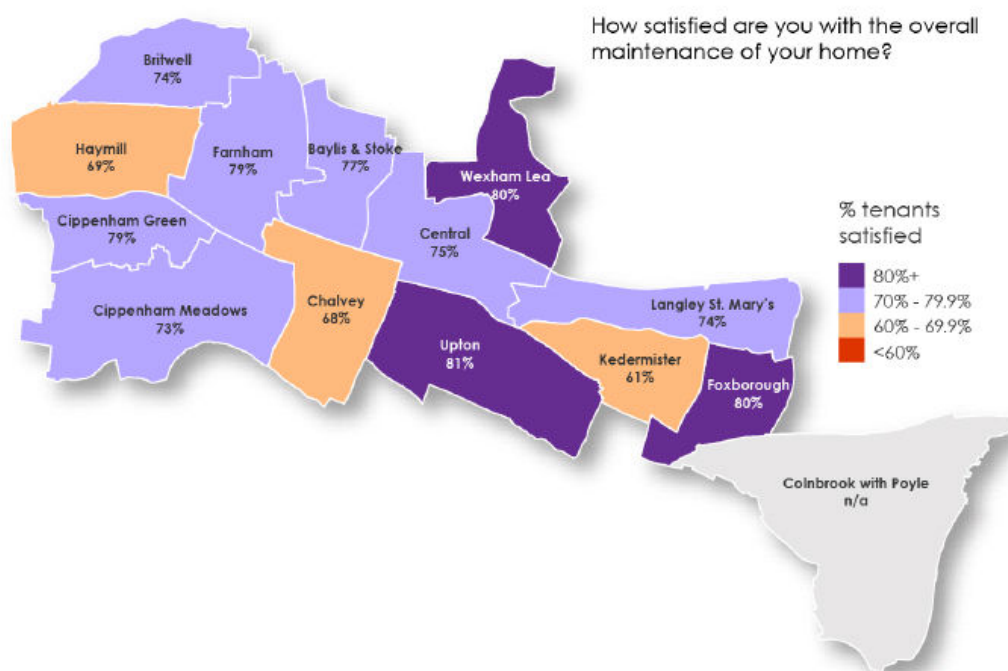
An Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix A.

5. **Supporting Information**

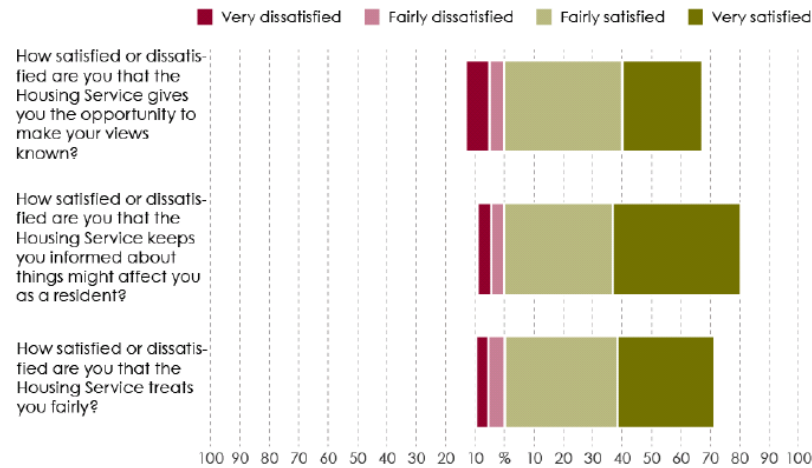
- 5.1 The regulatory requirement to test resident satisfaction on a three yearly cycle using the standard STATUS survey was scrapped by the Government in 2010. In response Housemark developed the STAR (Survey of Tenants And Residents) process to enable housing providers to continue to test resident satisfaction using standard questions that could then be benchmarked against other, similar, providers. Providers can choose from a range of themed questions to add to the set of core questions to be included in surveys.
- 5.2 The Housing Service carried out a resident satisfaction survey of all tenants and leaseholders between April and June 2013 using the STAR survey process. Following discussion by the management team, the Slough Customer Senate were invited to select the questions to be added to the core questions in the survey to support their scrutiny review programme.
- 5.3 Using the corporate tendering process, CR Market Research were selected to undertake the survey on the council's behalf and postal surveys were sent to all tenants and leaseholders on 12 April 2013. A further two reminders were posted on 9 May and 4 June which were then followed up with telephone surveys to ensure that a statistically significant return rate was achieved.
- 5.4 A total of 1,794 responses were received, representing a 26% return rate from tenants. The response gives 95% confidence (with a margin of +/- 2%) that the data represents a true reflection of tenants' views. Initially the feedback from Colnbrook & Poyle was discounted as only 5 responses were received from tenants living there however, in reality, this represents a 23% return rate from the 1 flat and 20 mobile home bases located there. A further report was therefore written to analyse feedback from this ward. The table below shows the percentage of responses by ward:

Ward	Tenants	% of tenants	Sample	% of sample
Baylis and Stoke	541	8.2%	146	8.3%
Britwell	1193	18.0%	239	13.7%
Central	226	3.4%	88	5.0%
Chalvey	409	6.2%	107	6.1%
Cippenham Green	322	4.9%	113	6.5%
Cippenham Meadows	431	6.5%	120	6.9%
Colnbrook with Poyle	14	0.2%	5	0.3%
Farnham	271	4.1%	103	5.9%
Foxborough	477	7.2%	111	6.3%
Haymill	720	10.9%	144	8.2%
Kedermister	957	14.4%	193	11.0%
Langley St. Mary's	238	3.6%	97	5.5%
Upton	219	3.3%	100	5.7%
Wexham Lea	616	9.3%	183	10.5%
	6,634		1,749	

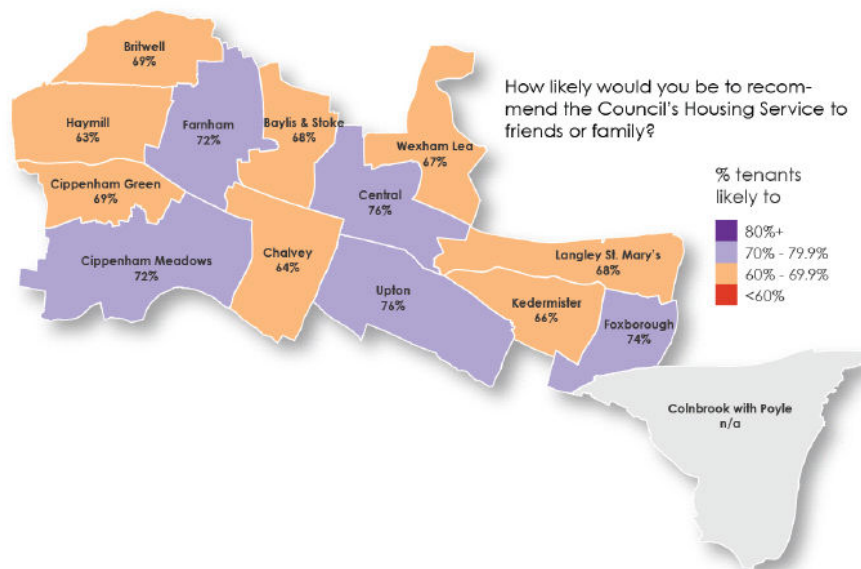
- 5.5 Disappointingly just 80 responses were received from leaseholders which does not constitute a representative view. However the feedback will be used to inform further research to understand leaseholder satisfaction with the service.
- 5.6 The feedback was analysed and separate reports written based on the current and new ward boundaries. The analysis did not reveal any geographic patterns or splits although overall residents living in Langley St Marys and Kedermister are generally less satisfied than residents living elsewhere in Slough. Further work will be done to understand the reasons for this.
- 5.7 The main findings of the survey were:
- 5.7.1 74% of tenants are satisfied with the maintenance of their home, 30% of which are very satisfied.



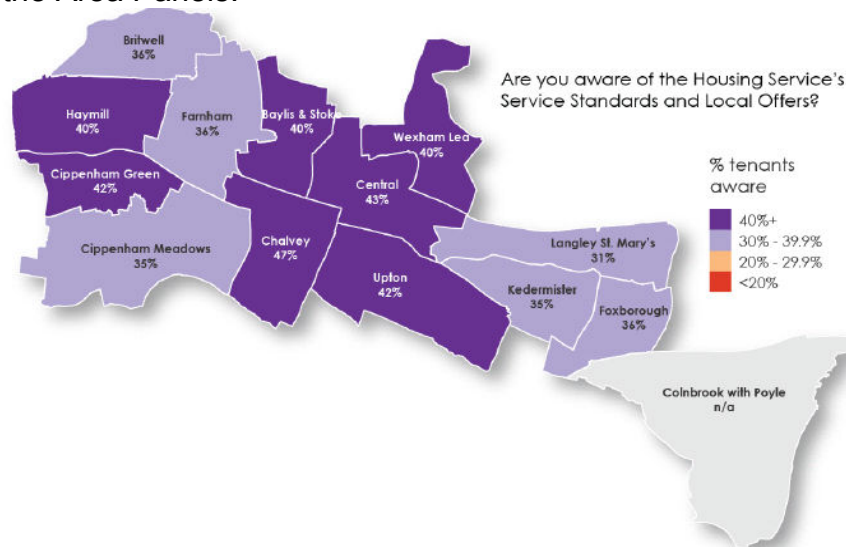
5.7.2 67% of residents are satisfied that the Housing Service gives tenants the opportunity to make their views known.



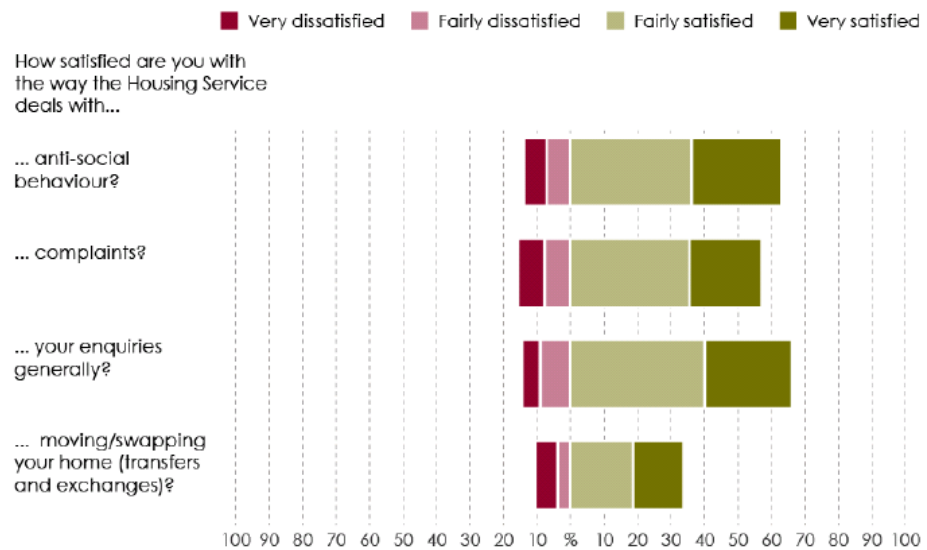
5.7.3 69% of residents said that they would be likely to recommend the service to others, 37% of which reported that they would be very likely to do so.



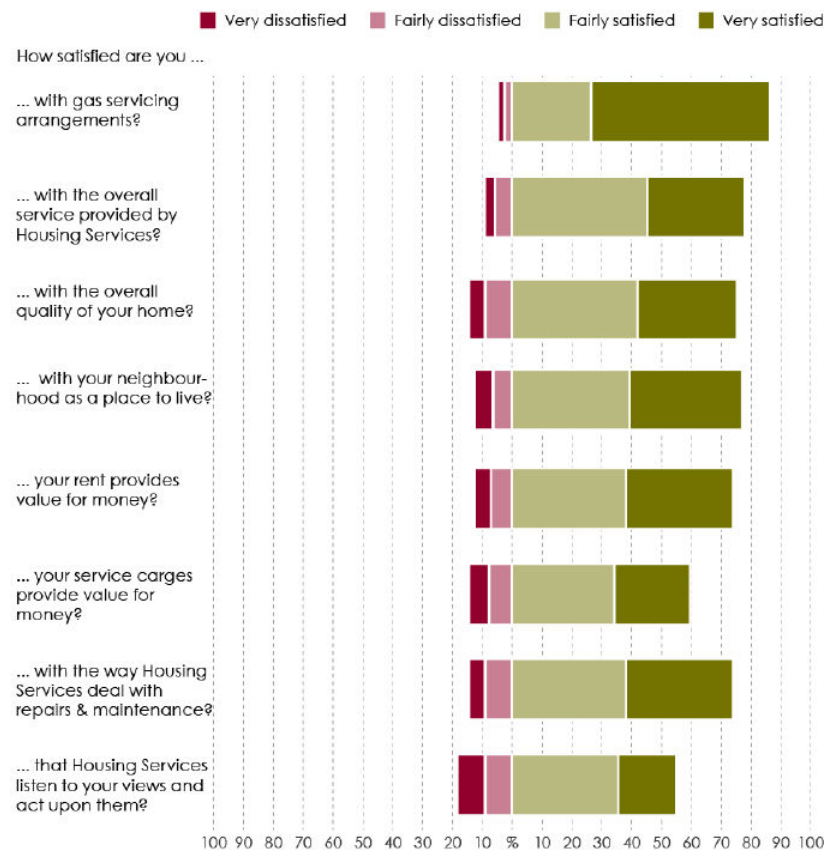
5.7.4 It was disappointing to note that only 39% of residents stated that they were aware of the Housing Service's service standards and local offers. Further work will be done to promote and monitor these, particularly with the Area Panels.



5.7.5 Whilst satisfaction with the way that complaints and enquiries are dealt with is generally high, it is clear from residents' feedback that further work needs to be done to improve satisfaction further in this area. The process to communicate and share learning from complaints will hopefully improve satisfaction in this area



5.7.6 There is also room for improvement on the indicators relating to residents' perceptions of the Housing Service listening to and acting on their views (55%) and whether service charges provided value for money (59%). A project looking specifically at service charges has been planned and is pending completion of the restructure of the service.

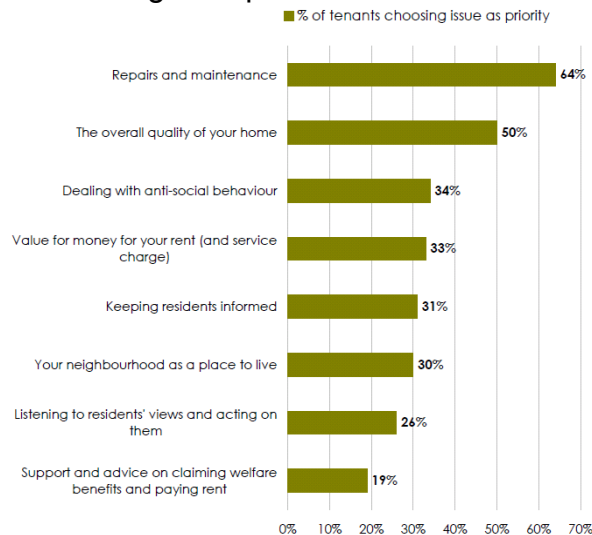


5.7.7 Further analysis reveals that there is a gap of 26 percentage points in residents' satisfaction with the overall quality of their home between residents living in Foxborough (86%) and Chalvey (60%). Opportunities to improve this will be explored with the Area Panel and the Senate.

5.7.7 When asked which areas the Housing Service should prioritise, residents indicated that the following should be the top priorities:

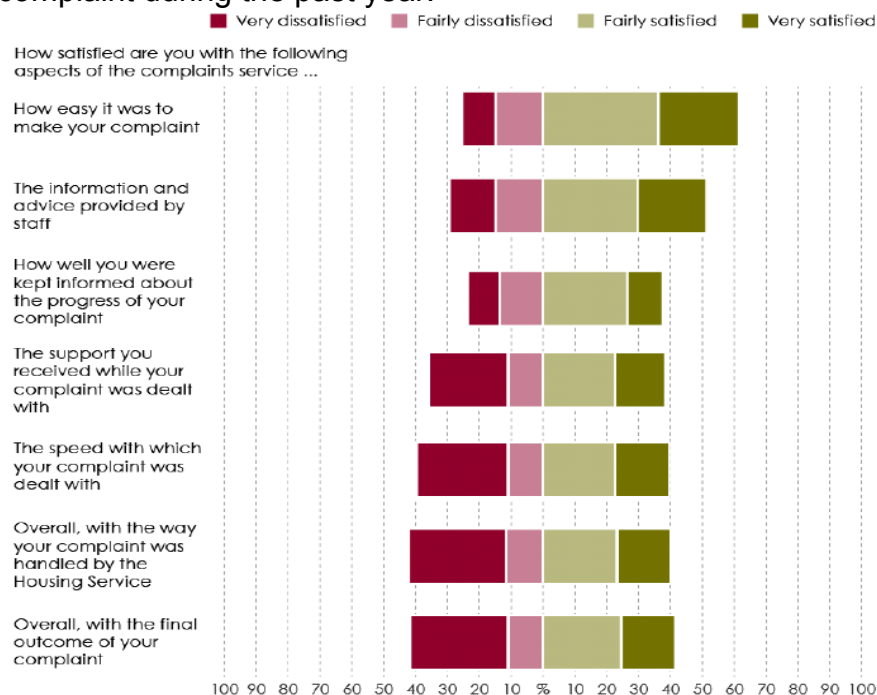
- Repairs and maintenance
- The overall quality of homes
- Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour

The full range of options to choose from can be seen below.



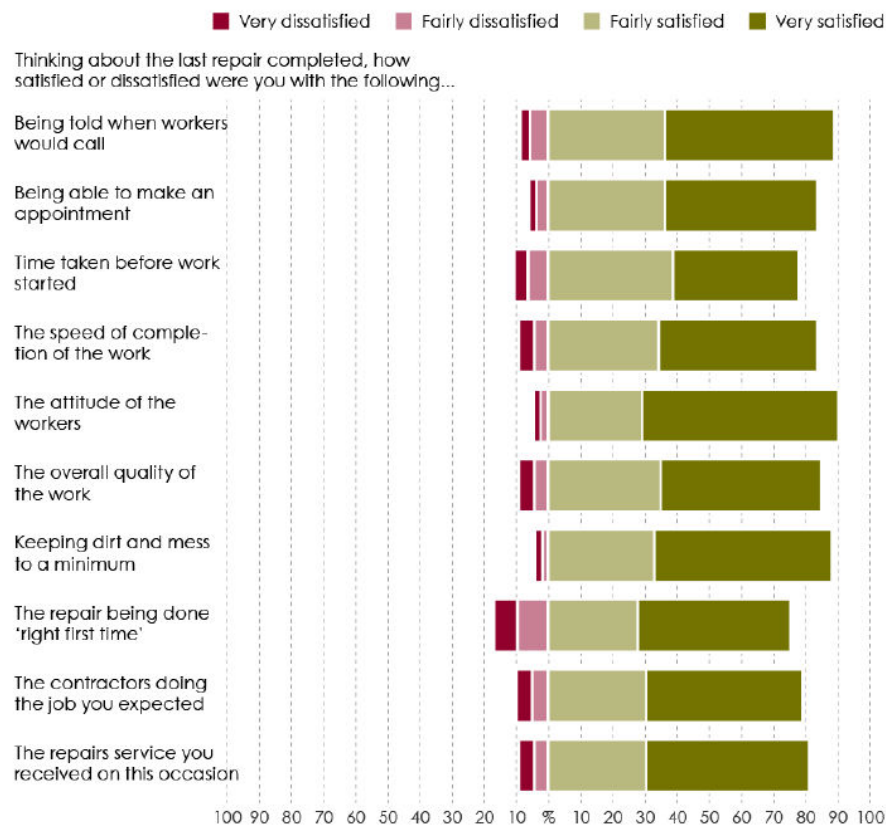
5.7.8 Overall 59% of respondents stated that they had contacted the Housing Service in the previous 12 months. Of these less than half found it easy to get hold of the right person, although two thirds found staff to be helpful.

5.7.9 Just 52% of residents indicated that they are aware of the formal complaints procedure, although 15% stated that they had made a complaint during the past year.

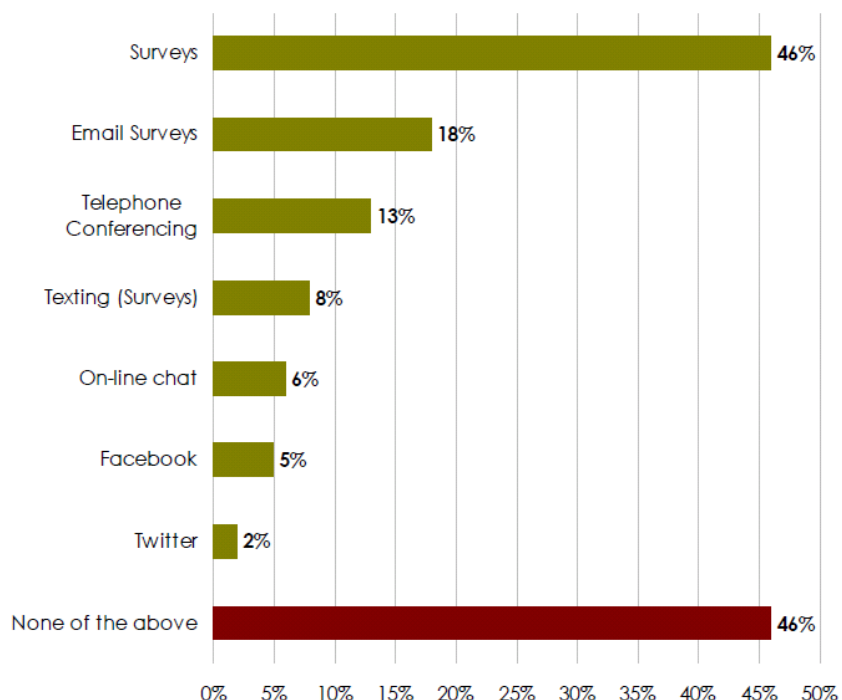




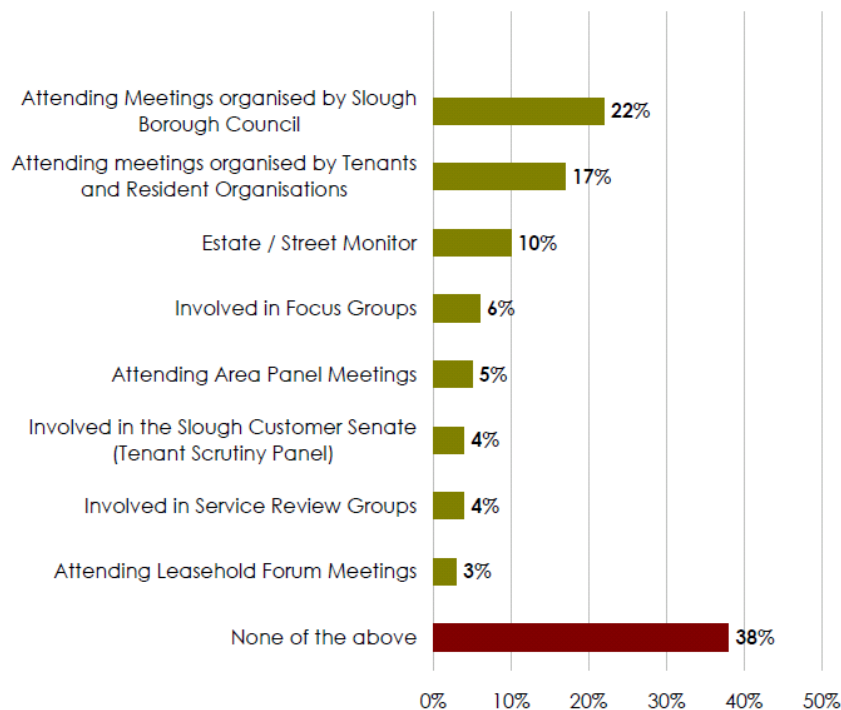
5.7.10 There are generally high levels of satisfaction with the repairs service delivered by Interserve across a range of measures.



5.7.11 When asked how residents would prefer to get involved in having a say about the Housing Service residents indicated that they would prefer to complete surveys above any other involvement method. Equally 46% of respondents indicated that they did not want to be involved at all. Interestingly, just 44% of respondents stated that they had access to the internet at home which would support access to some of these methods of involvement.







5.7.13 Respondents living in Colnbrook & Poyle indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with all aspects of the service and stated that listening to residents and acting on their views should be the main priority. Encouragingly all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the service is effective and efficient and staff treat residents fairly.

## 6. **Conclusion**

- 6.1 Together with the Performance Management Framework, the STAR survey feedback will be used to drive continuous improvement, establish priorities and monitor service delivery. Whilst the results are encouraging, they highlight a number of areas for improvement and opportunities to increase residents' satisfaction with the service.
- 6.2 A number of projects are underway to address the issues identified by the feedback, several of which will be addressed by the pending restructure and creation of a Neighbourhood Service supporting the delivery of tenure blind services to neighbourhoods. Detailed ward profiles have been developed to increase understanding of the issues impacting on neighbourhoods and communities and improvements will be further explored by working with the Senate and local Area Panels.
- 6.3 Research will be carried out to explore options for increasing digital inclusion to support the government's 'Digital by Default' campaign. Mobile working solutions will also enhance service delivery, enabling officers to deliver services to residents in their homes and neighbourhoods.
- 6.4 Further work must also be done to develop innovative and creative ways to involve residents in influencing decisions and scrutinising services. This area has traditionally proved to be challenging, however the value of engaging with and involving residents is significant in terms of developing and delivering high quality services that meet residents' needs and expectations.

- 6.5 It is proposed that a STAR survey is carried out each year on a sample of tenants and leaseholders to gauge the success (or otherwise) of initiatives to increase satisfaction.

7. **Conclusion**

- 7.1 The panel are asked to note the contents of the report and comment as necessary. A full copy of all STAR survey feedback is attached at Appendix A

8. **Appendix**

A - 2013 STAR Report