

THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2014

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &
VOLUNTARY SECTOR**

COUNCIL HOUSING TENANTS' ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

EXEMPT INFORMATION**PURPOSE**

To provide details of the Councils Landlord Performance for 2013/14 as required under the Homes & Community Agency Landlord Regulatory Framework 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet approve:-

- Production of the Council's Landlord Annual Tenants' Report (2013/14) complying with required governance under the Landlord Regulatory Framework, shown at **annex one**.
- Distribution of the Annual report and future editions of 'Open House' as e-publications, available on-line as well as targeted hard copy to ensure value for money

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's landlord is well placed to contribute to place shaping and delivers key services supporting Tamworth's vision – 'one Tamworth – perfectly placed' and its corporate objectives. Strategic headlines include:-

Healthier & Safer	Aspire & Prosper
c£5m investment in responsive and planned works to achieve decent homes across council owned stock	HRA business plan focused on growth with c£21.5m targeted for Regeneration of Tinker & Kerria including overseeing a successful decant programme
c£1m invested in Environmental Works including refurbishment of garages, drying areas, sheltered communal gardens and facilities resulting in 100% satisfaction – <i>"one Tamworth perfectly placed to deliver environmental improvements"</i>	c£2m planned annual investment into council housing building and developing strategic partnerships with investors to ensure commercial focus for the HRA going forward
Continued accreditation of the RESPECT standard for anti social behaviour with success with the co-	Continues to deliver a landlord housing options service aimed at promoting a range of choices around mutual

located hub	exchange, incentive to move, social mobility, home swapper, finding a garage and finding a home
Outcome based tenant involved with high profile projects such as intergenerational <i>cook n eat, grow your own</i> and <i>plant a pot initiatives</i> .	Preparation for Welfare Reform with investment into the third sector to support debt management and sensible borrowing including achieving core operational performance on income collection
Annual Programme of Estate Inspection to improve neighbourhood and estate services through in-house caretaking and cleaning services and in conjunction with street scene colleagues	Maximising commercial opportunity through contractors (Mears) to stimulate local business and economic regeneration with 10 new apprentices now recruited and local labour being used a continued repairs contract requirement of the council
Developed Health & well being Action plan to support 'Healthy Tamworth' - with tailored services to meet customers needs, i.e. Developed partnerships with the Staffordshire Fire & Rescue to ensure a continuation of the home fire safety service	Investment in tenants to equip them with the skills to influence and scrutinise services using the tenant central training tools.
Delivered sheltered housing services to 365 units aimed at ensuring health and well being of customers	Launch of 'finding a garage' reducing rent loss and improving local asset management and use of local resources
Mainstreamed the Supported housing team into the HRA service to support agenda around troubled families and building resilient communities, following SCC supporting people funding reductions.	Continued and improving overall satisfaction levels with the councils landlord = 86%. Ensuring that we remain a landlord of choice

Members approved in June 2014 a programme of external assessment across the Councils Landlord Service to test and ensure continued compliance with national standards aimed at delivering a quality housing management and maintenance service. This work continues to drive improvement and is reflected in this years Annual Report. Under the Homes Community Agency (HCA) Regulatory framework, there remains a requirement to produce an annual report detailing the performance and assessment of core housing management services to tenants. The publication will reflect ongoing work with tenants in terms of performance management, co-regulation and scrutiny.

Tenant Satisfaction levels, monitored within the landlord service, are at the highest since 2008 with satisfaction levels moving from 65% to 86%¹, effectively only 1 in 10 now unhappy with the service compared with 4 in 10 six years ago. As previously agreed by members the tenant regulatory service is being independently assessed by TPAS and it is expected that resulting improvements, including an externally

¹ This is based on a cumulative assessment of a range of qualitative surveys for specific landlord services

validated customer satisfaction survey (known as STAR²) will be carried out in 2014/15. Officers expect to report significant progress as well as being able to focus on more localised solutions for tenant engagement such as participatory budgeting, local service management and greater tenant scrutiny.

As in the past, the Tenant Consultative Group have influenced the production of this report and contributed to the target setting and scrutiny in relation to core housing management performance. If approved, the production of the Annual Tenants Report will be the 4th publication since the regulatory code was introduced. An independent assessment was carried out of previous publications by the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) in 2012/13 and a number of areas were noted as good practice and are further detailed in the main body of this report. A tenant centric assessment is used, along with the data, to produce this year's publication as well as inform the wider Tenant Involvement & Consultation Strategy.

Members should note that at the tenants request we have attached an actual copy of the Annual Report as well as core benchmarking data to add value to this years report to Cabinet.

Shown at **annex three** is an analysis of some of the key performance results that tenants' review monthly based on comparisons with other providers and shown on the live customer dashboard. As you can see Tamworth continues to achieve top quartile performance in a range of outcomes notably:-

- % of rent collected was 99.4% (2013/14) compared with 98.8% top quartile performance nationally. This meant Tamworth's landlord services are better than other top performing landlords such as Sandwell, Gravesham and Trent and Dove
- Average relet times continue to be less than the target of 21 days and performance for 2013/14 at 19 days was better than neighbours in North Warwickshire BC and Cannock Chase DC
- % of urgent repairs completed on time is 98.53% compared with upper quartile performers of 98% or more, better than Castle Vale CHA and Cannock Chase DC

Benchmarking across the sector and with 'best in class' is a core part of the councils landlord service performance management ensuring we are able to measure key performance indicators, improvements and operational efficiencies. As mentioned above Tamworth continues to remain in either top quartile or in an improving position.

Along with the Corporate Communications team we continue to review all tenant led publications. 'Open House' continues to be popular and there is evidence that this stimulates wider satisfaction with the landlord service as well as other council services. Recent feedback, however, has suggested that this is now sent via email and produced online. From customer profiling data we have nearly 1000 email addresses and it is intended to capture more as we support Corporate projects around digital inclusion. Being able to produce this electronically will also facilitate a more regular edition and satisfy requests for more up-to-date and timely information, so it is likely this will be produced bi-monthly. Moving to e-publications will save c£10k per annum and resulting savings can be invested into gathering improved customer profiling data so services can be tailored.

² Standardised Tenant Assessment Rating - formally the status survey which is no longer a regulatory requirement

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

As part of the organisational commitment to value for money tenants' have been asked for feedback in relation the distribution of the annual report. 86% of those responding said they would prefer to refer to it on-line or have access electronically.

The production of the annual report will be advertised on the web and via an e-newsletter to ensure value for money. The last 3 editions of the annual report have been sent in lieu of the autumn edition of 'Open house' to minimise costs. Going forward it is recommended that both publications will be sent electronically this will make savings to the HRA of c£10k per annum and can be invested in wider tenant engagement to promote the take up of digital inclusion and access.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Failure to comply with the Homes & Community Agency Regulatory Framework could result in intervention should this be assessed as causing "serious detriment" to tenants. The co-regulatory framework developed with tenants to assess consumer standards as well as contribute to economic regulation mitigates this risk going forward.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The overall satisfaction with the council's landlord services has a direct correlation with 'the place' and work has been cross cutting with street scene, community safety, and the voluntary sector to ensure improved results in these areas.

Report Author

Head of Landlord Services – Tina Mustafa Ext. 467
Tenant Regulation & Involvement Manager – Leanne Allwood Ext 484

List of Background Papers

Appendices

Annual Report to tenants 2013/14 (attached at the end of the report)
Customer Intelligence Report 2013/14 (attached at the end of the report)
Landlord Services Achievements 2013/14 (attached at the end of the report)

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Regulatory framework

As with all social housing providers, the Council's Landlord service is required to comply with the regulatory framework, initially developed through the Tenants Services Authority, and since its demise the Homes & Community Agency. As the Council's stock retained landlord it is not subject to the same economic regulation as registered providers in relation to governance and financial regulation, given the robust financial and constitutional arrangements that already exist in these areas. But in relation to the consumer standards, as a landlord, it must operate within a co-regulatory environment with tenants', so that they have the opportunity to shape, influence and scrutinise landlord services. There are four consumer standards which apply to the service we provide to tenants

Tenant involvement and empowerment

- Customer service, choice and complaints
- Involvement and empowerment
- Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

Home

- Quality of accommodation
- Repairs and maintenance

Tenancy

- Allocations and mutual exchanges
- Tenure

Neighbourhood and community

- Neighbourhood management
- Local area co-operation
- Anti-social behaviour

These standards form the framework in which Landlord Services provides and manages services to its tenants.

Key achievements of Landlord Services during 2013/14

Cabinet approved the HRA Business Plan (2012-2042) in March 2012 and this set out the challenges and ambitions going forward in light of the opportunities afforded by significant investment. These ambitions are already being realised as

- ✓ Regeneration plans are underway to invest c£21.5m in Tinkers Green and the Kerria Estates to deliver 150 new homes
- ✓ Environmental Enhancements have been progressed across all estates in Tamworth informed by locality and customer intelligence
- ✓ Core Landlord Services continue to show improvement when benchmarked nationally

Overall satisfaction with the landlord service based on 2011/12 performance from the

status survey is 75.2% and 92% for sheltered housing tenants. Whilst this is an improving position this remains a key challenge, but is not surprising given previous repairs and anti social behaviour performance, which was rated by 88% of tenants as one of the most important factors in renting their home. Already from the range of qualitative customer satisfaction monitoring undertaken locally during 2013/14 we expect this to have improved. The status survey has now been replaced by a 'star outcome' approach and this will be undertaken in 2014, as generally this type of survey is undertaken bi-annually. It is this figure that is benchmarked with peers.

Customer Satisfaction Highlights

Satisfaction	2013/2014
Overall tenant satisfaction with landlord services	75.2%
'Finding a Home' Survey	86%
Customer satisfaction with response repairs	91.2%
Satisfaction with complaint handling	89%
Customer Satisfaction ASB Survey	76%
Satisfaction with environmental works	100%
Satisfaction with Communal Cleaning	87%
Aggregate	86%

Landlord Services continues to benchmark services through House Mark, Housing Quality Network and other regional benchmarking clubs to ensure the service develops and remains focused on outcomes. House Mark data currently available is summarised elsewhere in the report.

House Mark publishes an outturn report for the year in July and this has been used in the development of the Annual Report for 2013/14, so that Tamworth can comply with the requirement to compare itself with others.

Annual Report

If approved by Cabinet, this years Annual Report will be the 4th produced since the Regulatory Code was introduced in 2009/10. Cabinet have supported previous publications and content strengthened by making more reference to corporate and strategic opportunities, such as locality working and directly linking to the core strategic priorities, around Aspire & Prosper and Healthier & Safer.

During 2012/13, TPAS³ conducted an independent assessment of the previous Annual Reports and Tenant Involvement Strategy with a view to improving future content and publications.

TPAS used a range of documents to inform this assessment, namely:-

- TPAS Resident Involvement Quality Framework version 4

³ Tenant Participatory Advisory Services – An independent organisation representing tenants'

- Regulatory Framework for Social Housing 2012
- Annual Report Review – Tenant Perspectives 2011

The assessment identified the extent to which Landlord Service had demonstrated compliance with regulatory guidance, best practice and commitment to high standards of resident involvement empowerment quality. This was reported through the scheme of delegations on the 13 June 2012 and highlighted best practice in particular:-

The Annual Report

- Provides clear details on what the national standards are and provides direct examples of how each of these has been met.
- provides information on National Standards clarifying expectations and clearly provides information that reflects the information needs of tenants
- sets out clearly the role of the Tenant Consultative Group in, monthly monitoring, review and development of policies including monitoring and setting of performance targets
- Makes reference to a comprehensive complaints section that clearly illustrates what tenants have said, where listening has captured issues and been built into the improvement plans

Tenant Involvement Strategy

- the core aims and vision of the council is well set out and aligned to the vision for tenant involvement
- The section Formal opportunities for involvement clarity about monitoring by the Tenant Involvement Group is good. This section also sets out very clearly the formal and informal opportunities (good practice is demonstrated here to a level that most landlords are not meeting).
- the 10 pledges for consultation are excellent (rarely seen and good practice)
- the Strategy sets out very clearly the arrangements for review and monitoring
- there is good examples of how monitoring and review will happen (good practice)
- excellent Action Plan

Areas for improvement suggested have been incorporated and reflected future publications and include:-

- more detailed performance and illustration of capital works
- more comparisons with best in class
- outcome based around satisfaction on local intelligence

Performance of the Council's Landlord Service – Outturn 2013/14

There is no longer a bureaucratic reliance on the routine production of indicators and the emphasis is now on outcomes and impact assessment determined locally.

Landlord Service continues to review key performance indicators, with tenants', to ensure they remain customer focused and are meaningful. We will still continue with the live updating of the customer dashboard, on line, as reporting performance builds credibility and satisfaction. But the intention has been to reduce indicators and the

following have been agreed with tenants'. Cabinet are asked to endorse these for inclusion in the Annual Report.








	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Estimated Top Quartile*
Overall satisfaction with Landlord Services	65%	75.2%	75.2%	To be carried out in 2014/15	To be carried out in 2014/15	86%
Average time between lettings	28 days	21 days	16 days	13.58 days	19 days	21 days
Walkabouts	4	4	4	4	3	Not benchmarked
Satisfaction with communal cleaning	Not collected	85%	87%	86%	87%	-
Number of tenants on the database of involvement	242	344	373	348	428	Not benchmarked
% appointments made and kept	97%	98.4%	99.1%	99.6%	97.5%	97%
Gas servicing – CP12	99.9%	99.5%	99.7%	99.9%	99.8%	100%
Urgent repairs completed on time	100%	100%	100%	95.1%	99.5%	99%
Customer satisfaction with the repairs service	86%	86%	87%	91.5%	93.7%	90%
Arrears as a % of gross debit	1.5%	1.5%	2.0%	2.4%	2.3%	2.9%
Evictions	19	15	8	22	22	-

- Figures based on estimated top quartile range when benchmarked nationally –

Other than overall satisfaction (based on 2011 status) all performance indicators are in either the top quartile or reflect an improving position. Targets are SMART and are

alive to the national performance.

Landlord Performance Report - Top performance indicators as voted for by tenants
 – As at 31 March 2014

Performance Indicator	Target	Current Value	Are we on target	Trend
Percentage of all responsive repairs completed within target	97%	98%		↑
Percentage of appointments made and kept	96%	98%		↑
Percentage of repairs completed on first visit	80%	90%		↑
Percentage of properties with valid Gas Safety Certificate	100%	100%		↑
Average re-let times (in days)	16 days	19 days		↓
Percentage of ASB reports acknowledged in writing within 24 hours	90%	95%		↑
Percentage of ASB cases with an agreed customer action plan within 10 days	90%	89%		↓
Current rent arrears as a percentage of annual debit	%	2.28%		
Number of complaints since 1st April 2013	-	241	-	-
Number of complaints upheld since 1st April 2013	-	17	-	-
Number of compliments since 1st April 2013	-	105	-	-

Customer Intelligence 2013/2014

A full summary of tenant feedback is provided at appendix A. The development of the “*you said, we listened*” feedback in conjunction with the tenant review panel has seen real outcomes for tenants as this information has been used to drive continuous improvement.

Across the total number of 241 complaints, (42) 17% relate to Tenancy/ASB issues, (91) 38% Mears, (13) 5% Morrison and (35) 15% TBC Repairs

Across the total number of 105 compliments, 33% relate to the Caretaking Service

Complaints upheld

During 2013/2014 there were a total of 17 complaints that following investigation was classified as upheld. Of the total 17 cases, 11 (65%) were associated with Mears

The following themes were concluded to the closure of the complaint

- Lack of communication
- Delay in service response
- Perceived poor service

In 3 out of the 17 upheld cases, a small payment of compensation was paid to the customer. In all 17 cases, an apology was made direct to the customer for their expressed dissatisfaction with service response.

.A total of 505 complaints, compliments and service requests were received within Landlord Services during 2013 – 2014. Of the total number received, 48% of these were complaints, 21% compliments and 31% service requests.

Whilst there has been a marginal increase in complaints, there has been a significant decrease in service requests.

How do we compare!

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Complaints	283	204	237	241
Compliments	171	208	184	105
Service Requests	60	158	237	159
Total	514	570	658	505

Complaints & Compliments

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Number of complaints	283	204	236	241
Number of stage 1 complaints			214	213
Number of stage 2 complaints			17	22
Number of stage 3 complaints			5	6
Number of complaints upheld			18	17
Number of compliments	171	208	184	105

In summary, only 4% of complaints were received within Landlord Service during 2013/2014. This is a significantly small proportion in relation to 5901 household and garage tenancies.

Along with the Head of Customer Services this approach will continue to be developed in line with the corporate 'Tell Us' policy.

Landlord Service will ensure that our Tenant Consultative Group are equipped with the skills and knowledge to effectively scrutinise and inform policy making as well as agreeing performance management arrangements. Landlord Service and tenants

have worked together to develop a competency framework that sets out the core skills required to serve as a member of the Tenant Consultative Group. This remains voluntary, but the matrix will be populated by dates and evaluations of training as each of the members' of the TCG attend. This will demonstrate the seriousness the council puts on investing in its tenant representatives and is specifically tailored to meeting the localism agenda around customer engagement.

Training will also be aimed at both involved customers and newly-formed scrutiny panels. It gives them the knowledge, skills and confidence to take part in service reviews and reality checking.

Training will be delivered through a variety of mechanisms, including internal and external training.

The key competencies are:

- To have an awareness of equality and diversity
- To understand roles in participating in meetings
- To understand basic financial management
- To effectively scrutinise services by understanding performance information
- To understand the key principles around governance and how this links to the democratic process.

Customer Intelligence 2013/2014

End of year report

“You said – we listened”

Introduction

This report sets out an analysis of all customer intelligence received within Landlord Services between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014. It reviews complaints and any emerging themes, compliments, service requests, tenant satisfaction, key performance information and any additional customer intelligence/feedback that has been collated during the course of the financial year.

Customer Satisfaction Feedback

Tamworth Borough Council values customers' compliments, comments and complaints as this provides fundamental feedback on performance that consequently helps to improve services.

Feedback from tenants and other service users is essential in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of service delivery within Landlord Service, allowing us to identify strengths as well as any areas of weakness which need to be addressed. We continue to develop new and improved ways to gather and scrutinise tenants' views.

It is important to Landlord Service to record and monitor complaints in terms of how quickly they are responded to and acted upon. We closely monitor the type of complaints we receive, the service area to which the complaint relates to, timescales in which complaints are responded to and any common emerging themes to ensure customers receive the highest quality service.

We aim to learn from complaints. Where a service has failed we will

- identify the problem and address this for the complainant
- address any underlying problems and ensure that this doesn't reoccur in the future;
- discuss emerging themes/trends with the Complaints Review Panel and escalate recommendations for future service improvement

How do we compare!

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Complaints	283	204	237	241
Compliments	171	208	184	105
Service Requests	60	158	237	159

Total	514	570	658	505
--------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

What we know at a Glance!

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Tell Us'	268	263	290	215
Complaints	97	103	142	141
Compliments	170	147	128	61
Service requests	/	13	20	13
MP Enquiries	56	50	39	30
Complaints	27	14	/	1
Compliments	/	/	/	/
Service Requests	29	36	39	29
Councillor/Other	190	257	122	90
Complaints	159	87	11	5
Compliments	/	61	4	2
Service Requests	31	109	107	83
Other	Council/Other correspondence was separated at the beginning of 2012/13 to determine the most popular means of communication.		207	170
Complaints			84	94
Compliments			52	42
Service Requests			71	34
Year Total	514	570	658	505
Response time	7 days	7 days	8.75 days	6 days

Complaints & Compliments

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Number of complaints	283	204	236	241
Number of stage 1 complaints			214	213
Number of stage 2 complaints			17	22
Number of stage 3 complaints			5	6
Number of complaints upheld			18	17
Number of compliments	171	208	184	105

2013/2014

A total of 505 complaints, compliments and service requests were received within Landlord Services during 2013 – 2014. Of the total number received, 48% of these were complaints, 21% compliments and 31% service requests.

Across the total number of 241 complaints, (42) 17% relate to Tenancy/ASB issues, (91) 38% Mears, (13) 5% Morrison and (35) 15% TBC Repairs

Across the total number of 105 compliments, 33% relate to the Caretaking Service

In summary, only 4% of complaints were received within Landlord Service during 2013/2014. This is a significantly small proportion in relation to 5901 household and garage tenancies.

Complaints upheld

During 2013/2014 there were a total of 17 complaints that following investigation was classified as upheld. Of the total 17 cases, 11 (65%) were associated with Mears

The following themes were concluded to the closure of the complaint:

- Lack of communication
- Delay in service response
- Perceived poor service

In 3 out of the 17 upheld cases, a small payment of compensation was paid to the customer. In all 17 cases, an apology was made direct to the customer for their expressed dissatisfaction with service response.

Learning from Complaints

Learning from complaints will continue to assist us in improving our processes at Tamworth Borough Council. Tenant involvement will continue to play an important role in demonstrating how we are improving services and handling complaints through the quarterly 'Complaints Review Panel' meetings. This will help to ensure a continued systematic approach to learning.






Compare our Performance April 2013 – March 2014



Landlord Service continues to review key performance indicators, with tenants', to ensure they remain customer focused and are meaningful. We continue with the live updating of the customer dashboard, on line, as reporting performance openly builds credibility and satisfaction. However, the intention has been to reduce indicators and the following have been agreed with tenants'.

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Estimated Top Quartile*
Overall satisfaction with Landlord Services	65%	75.2%	75.2%	To be carried out in 2014/15	To be carried out in 2014/15	86%
Average time between lettings	28 days	21 days	16 days	13.58 days	19 days	21 days
Walkabouts	4	4	4	4	3	Not benchmarked

Satisfaction with communal cleaning	Not collected	85%	87%	86%	87%	-
Number of tenants on the database of involvement	242	344	373	348	428	Not benchmarked
% appointments made and kept	97%	98.4%	99.1%	99.6%	97.5%	97%
Gas servicing – CP12	99.9%	99.5%	99.7%	99.9%	99.8%	100%
Urgent repairs completed on time	100%	100%	100%	95.1%	99.5%	99%
Customer satisfaction with the repairs service	86%	86%	87%	91.5%	93.7%	90%
Arrears as a % of gross debit	1.5%	1.5%	2.0%	2.4%	2.3%	2.9%
Evictions	19	15	8	22	22	-

Top performance indicators as voted for by tenants – As at 31 March 2014

Performance Indicator	Target	Current Value	Are we on target	Trend
Percentage of all responsive repairs completed within target	97%	98%		↑
Percentage of appointments made and kept	96%	98%		↑
Percentage of repairs completed on first visit	80%	90%		↑
Percentage of properties with valid Gas Safety Certificate	100%	100%		↑
Average re-let times (in days)	16 days	19 days		↓

Percentage of ASB reports acknowledged in writing within 24 hours	90%	95%		↑
Percentage of ASB cases with an agreed customer action plan within 10 days	90%	89%		↓
Current rent arrears as a percentage of annual debit	%	2.28%		
Number of complaints since 1st April 2013	-	241	-	-
Number of complaints upheld since 1st April 2013	-	17	-	-
Number of compliments since 1st April 2013	-	105	-	-

Customer feedback/satisfaction across Landlord Services 2013 - 2014

Status Satisfaction Survey

As a Local Authority we have previously been required to carry out the Standardised Tenant Satisfaction Survey on a bi-annual basis. The principal objectives of the survey has been to provide robust data which accurately represents the views of local tenants on overall satisfaction with landlord services and provides a comprehensive view of other perception-based measures on a wide range of specific services. The last Status Survey was carried out in 2011 and showed an overall satisfaction rate of 75.2%. In July 2011, the STAR survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents) was launched to replace STATUS. Following on from its consultation, this survey is now available for use by all social landlords. The STAR survey is similar to the old STATUS survey although changes have been made to make it far more relevant to tenants/landlords. The Star Survey will be carried out at Tamworth during 2014/2015.

During the interim years of STAR we continue to send out a series of similar surveys to tenants and leaseholders based on key priorities as part of Landlord Services annual satisfaction Calendar.

During 2013/2014, Landlord Service engaged and carried out significantly more qualitative research to determine customer opinion and expectation i.e. ASB telephone surveys. The primary benefits of qualitative research is that information is considerably richer than a series of numbers on a page, and in addition we can interact with customers more positively as at the same time as performing the research. For Landlord Service this is key opportunity to interact and communicate with those tenants that ordinarily we may not get to engage with.

Customer Satisfaction Calendar 2013/2014

Since April 2010 Landlord Service has developed a robust programme of mechanisms to consistently compare tenants' satisfaction with housing services. The annual customer satisfaction calendar is used to develop more regular/consistent customer satisfaction monitoring to determine satisfaction levels and improve services accordingly. This calendar covers all areas across Housing & Health from anti-social behavior, communal cleaning, repairs, housing advice and housing options. Customer feedback has been looked at through a variety of

methodology to assess satisfaction about the way we manage both our tenancies and our estates. We have asked tenants for their views via customer focus groups, telephone & postal surveys and numerous consultation events. The calendar is reviewed annually with the Tenant Involvement Group and through discussion with service area Managers.

Customer intelligence 2013/2014

During 2013/2014 we have continued to review and measure customer service levels in many different ways as the most productive method for measuring customer service levels across one area may differ for other areas. The Tenant Regulatory and Involvement Team are responsible for collating, monitoring and reporting on the following:

Customer intelligence 2013/2014 & 2014/2015		
Customer feedback/Intelligence	Format	Frequency
Complaints satisfaction	Telephone	Monthly
Repairs satisfaction	Focus Group	Half yearly
New Tenant questionnaire	Paper based/postal	Quarterly
Open House	Paper based/postal & face-to-face	Bi-annual
Supported Housing moving in survey	Paper based	Quarterly
Supported Housing moving out survey	Paper based	Yearly
ASB Resident perception survey	Paper based/postal with rent statements	Yearly
ASB tenant satisfaction	Telephone	Monthly
STAR Survey	Paper based/postal	Bi-annual
Communal cleaning	Postal/face-to-face	yearly

In addition to the above, the following customer intelligence has also been collected:

- Repairs & Maintenance satisfaction
- Gas servicing satisfaction
- Finding a Home satisfaction
- Non-Bidders Questionnaire 'Finding a Home' – This is a questionnaire that is carried out to ascertain why some applicants are not bidding for properties on the 'Finding a Home' Choice Based Letting Scheme
- Consultation – High rise lift refurbishment programme
- Consultation/workshop – High rise sprinkler system
- Environmental works programme satisfaction
- Communal cleaning satisfaction

Landlord Service is committed to providing the best quality service in a responsive and approachable way. We continue to develop services to meet the changing needs within the resources available and to demonstrate value for money.

Complaints/compliments/comments

In addition to feedback gathered through the customer satisfaction calendar, we closely monitor comments, compliments and complaints through our corporate 'Tell

Us' form. We listen and learn from all customer feedback which is continually monitored and can lead to changes in process, policy, actions, activity, literature and material. Customers are increasingly encouraged to 'tell us' what they think of the services the Council provides through completing a 'Tell us' form. Within Landlord Service this is closely monitored by the Tenant Regulatory & Involvement Team to identify common themes and trends across specific service areas.

We also record and monitor MP and Councillor Enquiries, service requests and any additional ad-hoc comments or tenant suggestion/s for future service delivery.

Reporting and monitoring customer feedback

The results of all customer satisfaction surveys and feedback are reported quarterly to the Tenant Consultative and Tenant Involvement Groups. More specifically, the Complaints

Review Panel, set up at the beginning of 2012, monitor complaints and emerging trends/themes as part of the wider customer experience.

These groups provide the opportunity for tenant scrutiny of services and actions/recommendations are put forward to resolve issues. The findings from these reports determine where performance is good and where performance needs to improve. For 2014/2015 we will continue to produce a quarterly report for all customer intelligence, complimented by an end of year report to compare all satisfaction, compliments and complaints against the previous year's performance.

Impact Assessments

In addition to customer satisfaction surveys and tenant feedback, Landlord Service routinely carries out impact assessments for Landlord initiatives and activities. Impact assessments measure not only customer satisfaction but also the overall impact of activity to enable us to learn what has worked well and what can be achieved for future involvement/activity.

Tenant Inspectors

As part of the Tenant Involvement and Co-regulation framework the Council also runs an innovative scheme to empower Council housing tenants to act as tenant inspectors. This scheme which has now been running for nearly two years provides tenant volunteers with the opportunity to audit the delivery of estate caretaking and cleaning services. The scheme has recently been extended to include estate inspections. Tenant inspectors monitor the quality of service delivery against defined standards and undertake on-site inspections. Inspectors are empowered to call managers to account if services do not meet required standards and their feedback forms part of overall performance monitoring.

Performance Management

The complaints log, managed by the Landlord Improvement & Project Officer, will continue to be used to review and progress open complaints to ensure turnaround targets are met. Lessons learnt will be reviewed at both management and performance team meetings.

Looking to the future

Within the current financial climate and national policy changes affecting welfare benefits and housing there are implications for the services we provide, and in general will increase pressure on our services at a time when resources for public

services are declining. Time has been spent focusing on how we can re-design our services to minimise the impact of external change on the services we provide. Our priority continues to be to provide a high quality customer experience and to undertake the proactive work that is necessary to ensure we can better meet housing needs in the future.

All complaints about any aspect of the services that we provide are taken seriously and investigated and service improvements/staff training are put in place to ensure a positive customer experiences for the future.

You said, we listened

Landlord Service values its customers' comments, views and ideas about how services may be changed or improved. Below are some of the ways customers have already had an influence on services or ideas they have suggested, which gives an improved outcome for all customers.

<i>You said:</i>	<i>We listened:</i>
You have told us that Mears need to respond to complaints more promptly	The Complaints Review Panel have met with Mears and recommended that when there is likely to be a delay in carrying out or completing a repair then the tenant should be advised of this accordingly. The Panel have also recommended that when a response to a complaint is going to require further investigation then the customer is always advised of this in writing in addition to any telephone communication.
Improve the standard of empty properties before letting to new tenants	The Tenant Consultative Group and Tenant Inspectors will be working with staff to develop a new void property standard.
Why do some areas of the borough have an estate walkabout and others don't?	From April 2014 estate walkabouts have been replaced with a programme of estate inspections which will cover all wards of the borough between April to December inclusive. The actions and outcomes of all inspections will be reported on the web as part of 'You said, We listened', in Open House the tenants quarterly newsletter and will form part of the annual impact assessment for all tenant involvement activity.
Kitchen and bathroom refurbishments are taking over a week to complete	In reality kitchen refurbishments are being completed within agreed timescales it is simply that the agreed timescales are longer than some tenants would like. This is further compounded

	by the fact that work operatives are not on site constantly throughout the course of the works which again gives tenants the view that the work could be completed more quickly if they were on site more frequently.
Residents would like more regular updates on their anti-social behaviour complaints	<p>An action Plan is agreed between the customer and case officer. If a customer feels that they need more regular contact then this can be requested at any time and their action plan can be amended accordingly.</p> <p>We also monitor our ASB procedure by way of a quarterly telephone survey. We share the results through 'Open House', on the web and with our tenant involvement working groups.</p>
Residents believe that the time taken to try and resolve their damp and condensation issues takes far too long	Sometimes the issue of damp and condensation comes down to individual lifestyle. When this is not the cause we will endeavour to work with Oaks preservation to reduce the time taken to diagnose a damp/condensation issues

Landlord Service Achievements 2013/14

Tenancy Sustainment

- Organisational change effected 2 Income Max DH SC Portfolio SN WAP
- Welfare reform preparations – literature – visiting – tailored support plan – web – action plan – communication
- Rent First impacts link to schools/Education/Financial Inclusion
- Arrears & bad debt predicted 'accurately'
- Garage arrears met target
- Income on former tenant arrears
- Rent statements / increase routinely completed on time
- Rent Incentive scheme £250 quarterly impact successful
- Introduced landlord hardship fund and 48/49 rent weeks – payment holidays
- Successful benchmarking – HQN/RIEN/Corporate
- Keeping in Touch developing housing awareness
- Corporate Project Team lead by Sue Philp on welfare reform action plan
- Respect accreditation - The first Local Authority to achieve this
- Improved IT- The Community Action Solution system
- Organisational change – integration hub
- Improved satisfaction
- Links to troubled families (active engagement)
- Increased income on recharges
- Review procedure due to legislative changes on long standing arrears cases with court orders

- Became a key player in the court user group and implemented recommendations
- Review of rent court cases – agreement with the court on rent days/cases heard reducing officer time
- Service improvement plan for asb
- Not in my neighbourhood events - facilitate community and inter generational cohesion
- Increase in successful cases whereby DHP has been awarded in bedroom subsidy cases
- Service level agreement for mediation out to tender
- ASB no evictions – ASB curbed by other intervention
- In house ASB legal work – cutting outgoings by 50%
- Interim accreditation report for ASB
- ASB mystery shopping exercise
- Introduction of fact sheet library for tenancy management
- ASB profiling
- ASB focus group for asb zone
- Risk assessment of perpetrators and survey carried out

Repairs & Maintenance

- 18 months into new R & I contracts (successful mobilisation) and continuing to bed in
- 100% gas servicing – achievement from where we were with non-compliance
- £1m boiler installations being delivered on budget & on time
- Performance improving on repairs and gas - when benchmarked
- Close monitoring to ensure services are delivered within budgets
- Mears April 2012 – December 2013; satisfaction improving 91.2% - Up from 70% at start
- Reduced level of complaints
- Organisational change affected – appointment of senior repairs co-ordinator
- Stock condition updated – managed impact on budget
- Significant levels of Capital investment producing real outcomes, environmental and sheltered
- Caretakers/cleaning service – high satisfaction – and investment in equipment
- Properties in West Street and Anker Moor Court were re-roofed
- A number of sheltered schemes had a range of improvements and new furniture, curtains and carpets
- Cabinet approval for retro fitting of fire suppression system (sprinklers) to high rise blocks
- Flats in Honeybourne had new plastic cladding, wall insulation and the walkways repaired
- 2 high rise blocks were re-roofed

Customer Involvement & Empowerment

- Launched the Tenant Involvement and Consultation Strategy (informed by TPAS Health check)
- Produced annual Tenant Involvement Impact Assessment to include a total of 74 involvement activities/initiatives
- Recruited 11 new tenant inspectors

- Satisfaction calendar – analysed 800+ surveys to inform satisfaction and service delivery. Showing improving trend i.e. ASB target 80% Repairs 91.2%
- Second bi annual Tenants Conference was held in March 2014
- Customer Engagement regeneration/repairs Mears MFS
- Review estate walkabouts – completed by November
- Neighbourhood annual estate inspection programme - with tenant inspectors etc
- Publications – Annual Report/Open House/Intelligence and complaint monitoring routinely done on time
- Performance – benchmarking/DCLG/Consultation/ PI's renew
- Co-regulatory framework – ref board, chamber, tri partite regulation
- Updated Health Inequalities Plan 2013/2014 – 2014/2015

Supported/Sheltered Housing

- Satisfaction 93% status survey – level B QAF SCC inspection
- Welbeing and Tunstall – embedded and high satisfaction 95%+ - 60 seconds
- 100% pass on FARS/H+S/Legionella
- Major Capital Investment in Sheltered totalling c£280k sheltered c£250k environmental
- DFA – no waiting list
- Replacement lifelines underway
- Successful Handyman service
- Implemented fixed subsidy (SP) – sheltered
- Innovative solution to mainstream Ellerbeck and Chestnut Court– support linked to troubled families
- Updated star – outcome satisfaction for both services – 94% and rising
- All new literature – guides/leaflets
- Reviewed the calendar events based on 5 SP outcomes sheltered and supported
- Introduced volunteer policy
- Links NHS/Falls/Assistive technology/etc
- 100% of supported lettings turnaround in 10 days from tenancy end date
- 100% of homeless supported and sheltered applicants involved in a needs and risk assessment prior to moving in
- 100% of new tenancy visits completed at sheltered schemes within 24 hours of moving in
- 95% of calls to Welbeing alarm centre answered within 60 seconds
- Dementia Friends training for all staff

Housing Options

- Void turn around circa 13 days = < rent loss
- 94.42% customer satisfaction – finding a home
- Mutual exchanges - 32 in 2013/14
- Introduction 'finding a garage'
- Flexible fixed tenancies introduced
- Decant programme of 14 Cottage Walk tenants successful, with 100% satisfaction
- "Right Size" home swapper introduced and developing
- Tenant Reward scheme - £50 for leaving property in good condition
- DFA making best use of stock

- Incentive to move scheme
- Implemented organisational change 100% welfare checks at sign up
- 14 days to process all nominations
- 75% of empty properties with tenancy commencement within 7 days of fit to let date
- 75% of offers accepted first time
- 100% to contact successful applicant within 4 working days of the advertisement being closed
- Attended the 6th form academy (Qems) to give a careers talk on working in Housing

Also during the year!

What we achieved in 2013/2014	
Number of needs and risk assessment carried out prior to moving in	93
Number of new tenancy visits completed at sheltered housing schemes within 24 hours of moving in	53
Percentage of legionella checks completed during the year	100%

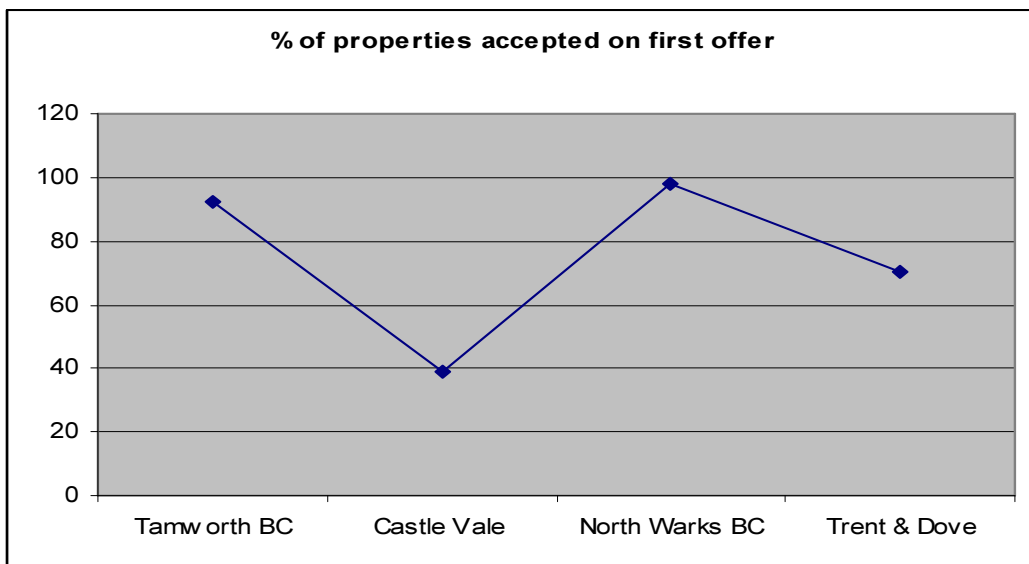
Home Improvement programme 2013/14

Improvement programme	How many	Total spend
Kitchens	124	£733,000
Bathrooms	179	£750,000
Roofing (High Rise)	2	£90,000
Windows & Doors	512	£1.1million
Disabled Adaptations	188	£540,000

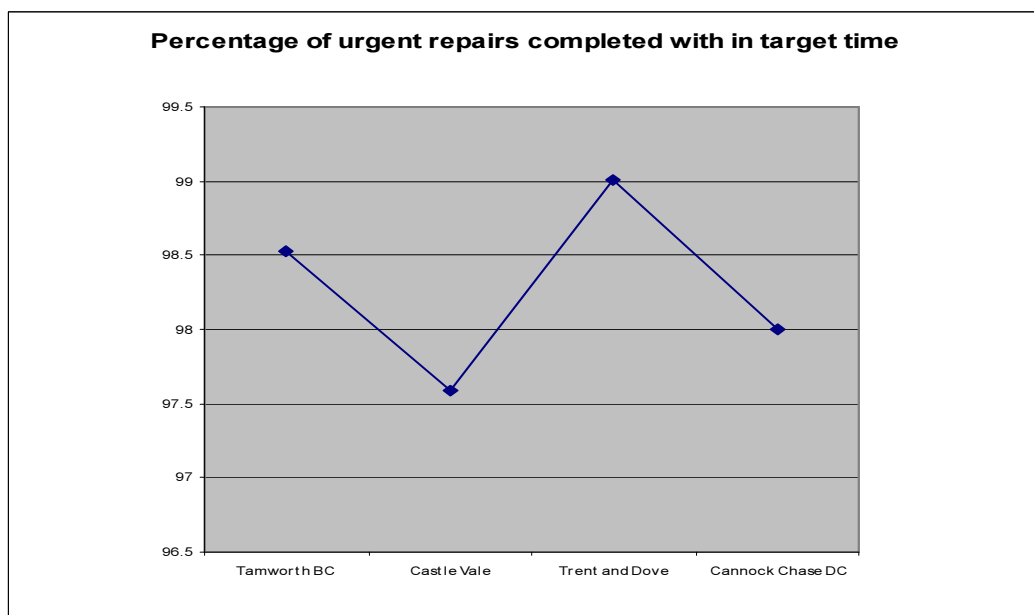
Benchmarking

The benchmarking that Tamworth Borough Council Landlord Services reports on is carried out between two HouseMark 'clubs'. The first club is for the stock retained councils, and reflects an accurate picture of how Tamworth Borough Council is performing. However, with only a small number of PI's that are recorded within this club, it is considered necessary to benchmark with HouseMark's national club for the West Midlands. This club is for registered providers and Council's, therefore captures a wider picture. The rationale for choosing the following PI's is that they cover each service area in Tamworth's Landlord Service. These PI's also give a comparison with councils and other registered providers, the majority being neighbouring providers.

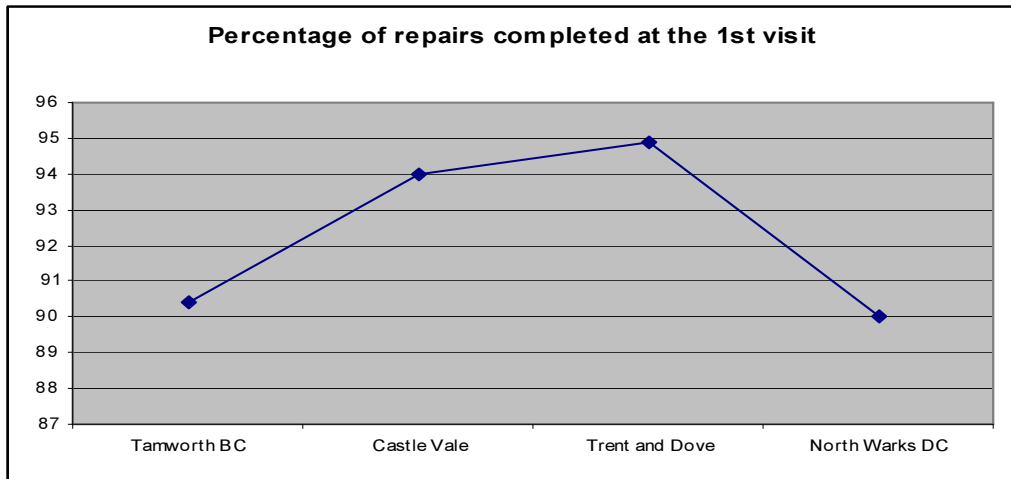
Upper quartile - 75.02% Tamworth - 92.42%



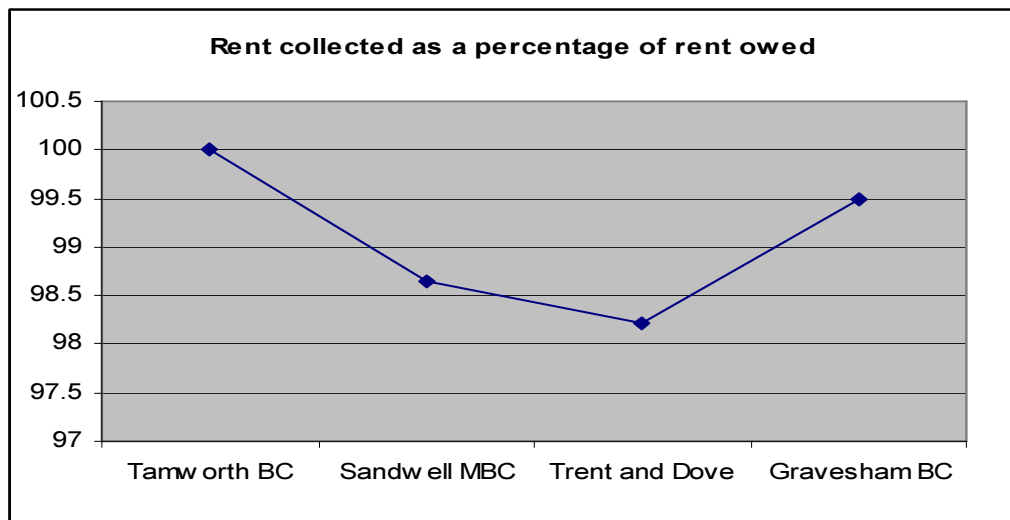
Upper Quartile - 98.00% Tamworth - 98.53%



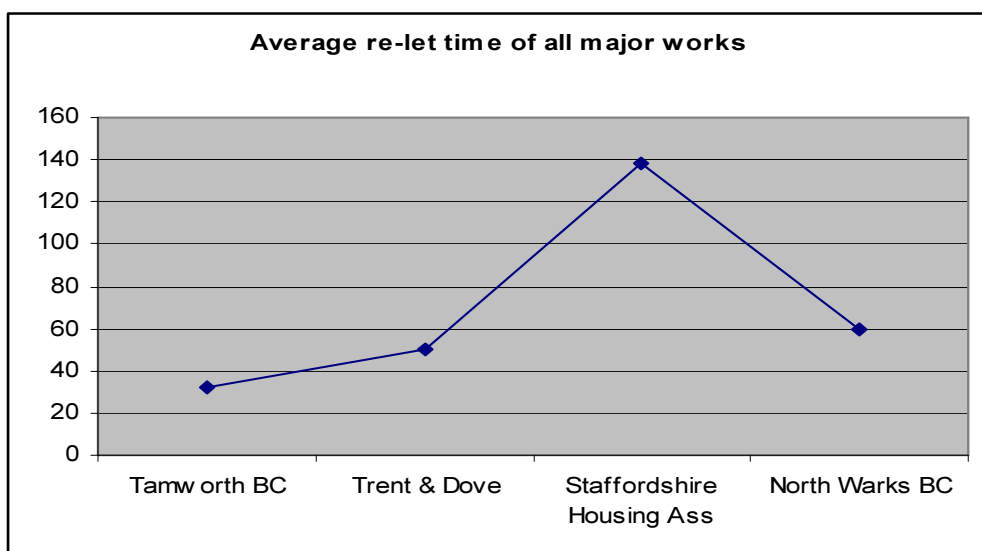
Upper quartile - 90.00% Tamworth - 90.42%



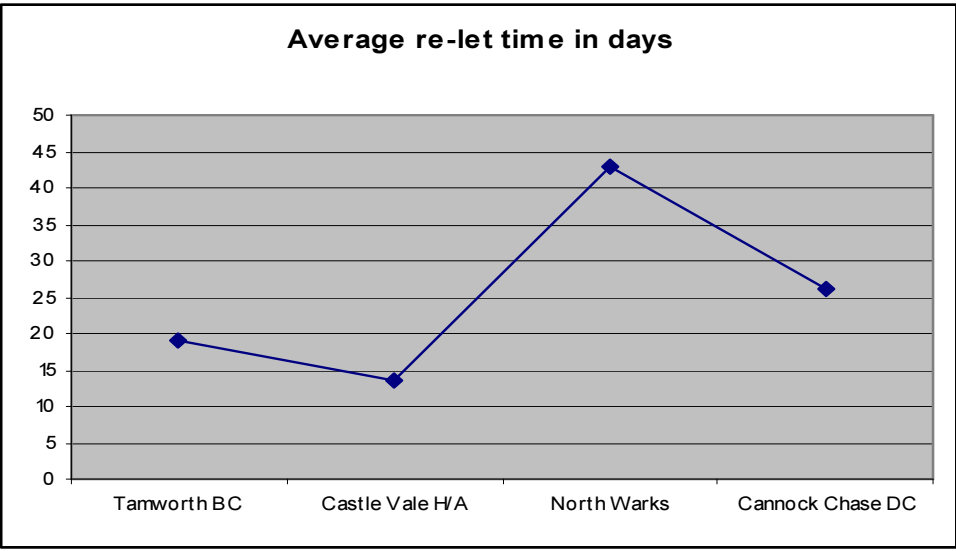
Upper quartile = 98.80% - Stock Retained Tamworth - 99.4%



Upper quartile - 37.39 Tamworth - 32.56

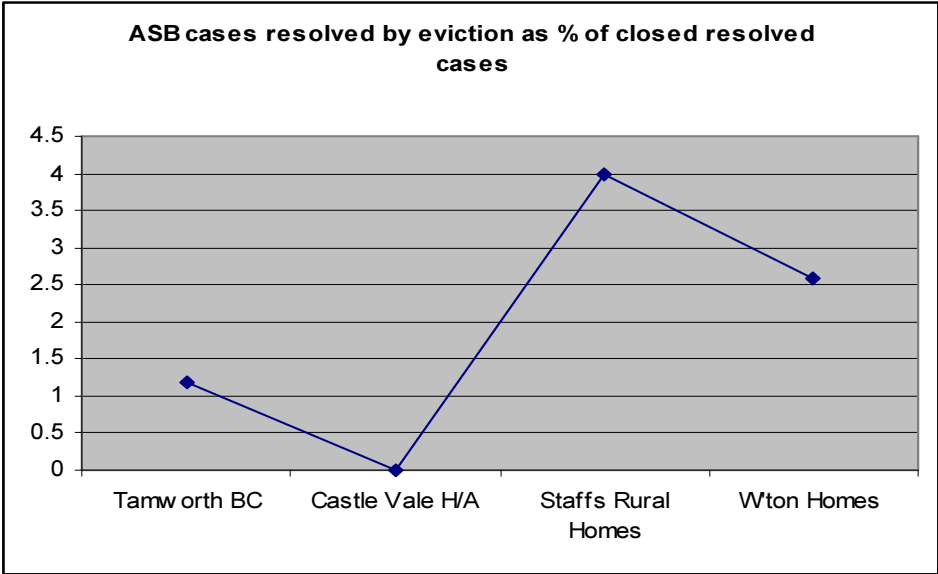


Upper quartile - 19.50 Tamworth - 19.00



Club

median - .63% Tamworth - 1.19



Club median - 2.59 Tamworth - 2.35

