



## Mid-Wales Housing Association 2009 STATUS Survey



by  
The Feedback Service - the tenant satisfaction  
survey service for social landlords

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## Executive Summary

### 1. Context

In 2009 Mid-Wales Housing Association (Mid-Wales Housing) commissioned the National Housing Federation's Feedback Service to carry out a STATUS survey. All tenants were included in the survey, which took place between June and July 2009.

Postal surveys are an important way of gauging how satisfied tenants are with service delivery. They provide a snapshot of tenants' views at a particular time. The advantage of using the STATUS questionnaire used by the Feedback service is that the survey can be repeated and the results compared over a period of time. Tenant satisfaction at Mid-Wales Housing can also be compared with satisfaction levels at other landlords that have used the STATUS survey.

### 2. Overall results

The survey found that Mid-Wales Housing's tenants are highly satisfied with their homes and the services provided by their landlord. 46% of tenants responded to the survey and the levels of satisfaction are demonstrated in the following key findings (\*excluding no opinions/can't remember):

- All aspects of the actual repair work carried out were rated as "good" or "very good" by over 89% of tenants who had a repair completed in the last 12 months\*
- 87% found staff helpful\*
- 86% felt that Mid-Wales Housing keeps them informed
- 85% were satisfied with the quality of their home
- 82% were satisfied with the general condition of their property
- 81% were satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service\*
- 81% were satisfied with the services provided by their landlord
- 81% were satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live
- 81% felt they obtain good value for money from their rent
- 72% believe that their landlord takes account of their views\*.

### 3. Issues which impact on satisfaction levels

Although the results of the survey represent tenants' views, it is important to recognise that views on quality of service delivery are affected significantly by the profile of the tenant group and by problems in the areas where tenants live. For example, a landlord with a large proportion of older tenants will always get significantly higher satisfaction levels than a landlord with a high proportion of families and adult households (33% of Mid-Wales Housing's tenants are older tenants). Furthermore, findings from both national surveys and other social landlords regularly show that young tenants and working households are often less satisfied than other tenants.

### 4. Comparison with other landlords

The results of key satisfaction questions in the Mid-Wales Housing survey have been compared with those of eleven other housing associations that have undertaken the STATUS survey in the last three years. The landlords in the peer group were selected to match Mid-Wales Housing as closely as

possible.

When the results of the survey were compared with those of the other landlords who have used STATUS, Mid-Wales Housing's performance was usually close to average or slightly above average in the peer group. Overall, the average ratings of landlords in the chosen peer group were higher than the average found in the National Housing Federation's entire database of landlords who have used the STATUS survey.

- No area of Mid-Wales Housing's performance was significantly above average.
- Mid-Wales Housing's performance was close to average (+/-3%) for satisfaction with the landlord services, quality of the home, condition of the property, value for money, neighbourhood, tenant contact (ease of contacting the right person, helpfulness of staff, ability of staff to deal with enquiry and satisfaction after contacting the landlord), overall repairs service, all aspects of the repair (information given about the repair, time taken before the repair work started, speed of the repair contractors, quality of the repair work, attitude shown by the repair contractors and the ability of the repair contractors to minimise dirt and mess), account taken of views and keeping tenants informed.
- No area of Mid-Wales Housing's performance was below average.

In a further comparison with 12 other Welsh landlords who have carried out STATUS surveys with the National Housing Federation, Mid-Wales Housing's performance was close to average for many key ratings and slightly above average in some areas – customer contact and aspects of the repairs and maintenance service.

## 5. Conclusion

The results from the survey demonstrate that Mid-Wales Housing is a popular landlord, and that tenants believe the Association is providing a good and, on occasions, excellent housing service. Overall, 81% of tenants were satisfied with landlord services. Tenant satisfaction with the quality of the home (85%), condition of the property (82%), neighbourhood (81%), value for money (81%), helpfulness of staff (87%), being kept informed (86%) and the repairs service (81% - 93%) was high.

The ratings for tenants are very positive given that the Association does not benefit from a particularly high percentage of older tenants (who typically award higher ratings than young tenants) and has a high percentage of tenants who are under 60 years old, working households and families (groups that typically award lower ratings). The profiling information collected from the survey will be used to supplement information already held in Mid-Wales Housing's housing management system enabling the Association better to tailor services to tenants' requirements.

When the ratings are compared with those of tenants (general needs and sheltered) at other similar social landlords, Mid-Wales Housing's tenants were on all occasions just as satisfied as tenants at other landlords. In all areas Mid-Wales Housing's performance was above the Federation's database average and higher than the Federation's database average for Welsh landlords for customer contact and aspects of the repairs and maintenance service.

## Recommendations

It is clear that the vast majority of tenants are satisfied with their landlord and the overall services provided. There are some areas and opportunities where performance and service delivery can be improved further and Mid-Wales Housing should use the results of the survey to undertake service improvements and promote the Association.

### ■ Repairs and maintenance service

The repairs and maintenance service was considered to be one of the three most important services by 82% of tenants. The results of this survey show that 81% of tenants were satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service, although a higher percentage of tenants were satisfied with each of the aspects of the repair work. The individual aspects of the actual repair work were in particular rated very highly (89% - 91%), with slightly lower satisfaction recorded for the information given (84%) and the time taken before the work started (82%). While 39% of tenants felt that the service needed no improvement, 44% felt some improvement was needed and 16% felt much improvement was needed.

The survey found that satisfaction with the repairs service is the key driver of overall satisfaction at Mid-Wales Housing. Satisfaction with the repairs service was found to be particularly influenced by the wait before the work started and the quality of the repair. Compared with other landlords in the peer group Mid-Wales Housing's performance was close to or slightly above average.

There were differences between the patches with regards to the individual ratings for aspects of the repairs service. Tenants in Patch 5 awarded slightly lower ratings for the information given (77%) and the quality of the repair work (86%), while those in Patch 4 awarded a lower rating for the speed of the workers (84%).

Mid-Wales Housing clearly delivers a high quality repairs service and should consider promoting the survey results to help to raise residents' opinions of the overall service – which should arguably be higher given the high ratings for the actual work. A focus on reducing the time before repair work is started and any subsequent delays - coupled with managing residents' expectations about when work will start - should have a positive influence on the overall satisfaction level.

### ■ Customer contact

A high percentage of tenants found staff easy to contact (79%), able to deal with their enquiry (78%) and helpful (87%). However, as at many other landlords, satisfaction with the final outcome of contact (72%) was lower than the other ratings for customer contact and was a key driver of overall satisfaction for Mid-Wales Housing' tenants. It is encouraging therefore that although tenants rated three of the four measures of customer contact (ease of contact, helpfulness of staff and ability to deal with problem) close to the peer group averages for these measures, satisfaction with the outcome of contact was slightly higher than average.

At patch level it would appear that fewer tenants in Patch 5 found staff easy to contact (72%) while fewer tenants in Patch 4 found staff able to deal with their problem (72%).

The findings suggest that customer care for tenants is strong but it is possible to argue that more tenants should be left satisfied in light of the higher ratings awarded for other aspects of customer

contact. The survey collected further information on tenant preferences for communication. Any future review should involve further research into the survey's findings to explore areas of lower satisfaction and should involve consulting tenants on future service enhancements.

### ■ **The neighbourhood and anti-social behaviour**

A high percentage of tenants were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (81%), and only 13% of tenants were dissatisfied with their neighbourhood. Tenants in Patch 5 were noticeably less satisfied with their neighbourhood (74%). Car parking, noisy neighbours, rubbish & litter, pets & animals and disruptive children/teenagers were the key problems for tenants, with a fifth or more reporting these to be fairly big or very big problems.

Just under a fifth of tenants (18%) had reported anti-social behaviour to Mid-Wales Housing in the last year. Levels of satisfaction with the response to their report were relatively high in terms of the ease of contact (60%), helpfulness of staff (58%) and the advice provided (58%). Fewer tenants found staff able to deal with the problem (38%) or were satisfied with other aspects of their complaint (33% - 41%). Anti-social behaviour services are by their nature prone to lower levels of satisfaction but there may be scope for improvement here by involving tenants in reviewing policy and case handling arrangements.

### ■ **Communications and tenant involvement**

Taking tenants' views into account and being kept informed were found to be key drivers of overall satisfaction at Mid-Wales Housing and these are areas where performance is relatively strong. A high proportion of Mid-Wales Housing's tenants felt they are kept informed (86%) and almost three quarters believed their views are taken into account (72%). The survey collected information as to which methods tenants prefer their landlord to use to inform, consult or involve them. These findings can be used to develop further tenant involvement at Mid-Wales Housing.

### ■ **Service priorities and areas for improvements**

Tenants were asked to identify from a list which three services were most important to them and therefore should be a priority for Mid-Wales Housing. The responses showed that repairs and maintenance was the top priority for tenants (82%). Other important areas in descending order of importance were the overall quality of the home (59%), value for money (33%), neighbourhood (33%), dealing with anti-social behaviour (30%), keeping tenants informed (30%) and taking account of tenants' views (28%). The survey also found that the repairs service and the quality of the home were the two areas where tenants would most like to see improvement.

A further question asked tenants what is important and what improvements they would like to see in their home. The responses showed that the top three areas for improvement were a new modern kitchen (42%), a new modern bathroom (38%) and upgraded doors and windows (37%). This provides useful information to inform, plan and prioritise future improvements.

### ■ **Advice and support services**

Tenants were asked about their satisfaction with a range of support and advice services provided by the Association. While the majority of tenants were satisfied with the advice on rent payments (84%) and how queries are dealt with (80%); lower scores were given for the advice on moving home (59%) and the support given to vulnerable and new tenants (64% - 67%).

Executive Summary - Comparison with other landlords - Standard satisfaction questions  
 - percentage of tenants saying they were satisfied/good (excludes don't know, can't remember and no opinion)

