

# London Borough of Camden

## 2019 Abbey Road TMO Satisfaction Survey Report

March 2020



# **Customer Survey 2019**

**Prepared for: Camden Council**

**by: Acuity**

**March 2020**

## **Produced by Acuity**

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# 1. Introduction

Acuity Research & Practice (an independent research agency) was commissioned to undertake an independent survey of the London Borough of Camden's (Camden) residents to collect data on their opinions and attitudes towards their Tenant Management Organisation (TMO), Camden Council and the services provided. The TMO survey forms part of a wider group of surveys of Camden's tenants and residents. The surveys were designed using HouseMark's STAR questions for resident satisfaction surveys.

## 1.1 About STAR

In July 2011 HouseMark launched STAR – a set of questions designed to measure tenant and resident satisfaction in the housing sector.

The approach ensures social housing providers remain equipped with the means of comparing key satisfaction results with other landlords and TMOs and also provides a framework for trend analysis.

Undertaking STAR surveys is just one of many different methods of involvement which management organisations are able to use to engage with their residents as part of a wider and coordinated customer engagement strategy.

## 1.2 Sampling frame and fieldwork

Acuity sent out an online survey to all tenants with an email address (with individual login codes) in advance of a postal survey on 14 October 2019. The number of tenants included in the postal survey depended upon the success of the online survey.

The postal survey consisted of two individual mailings. Acuity carried out the administration of the first mailout, which was sent out on 28 October 2019. This consisted of a copy of the questionnaire, a covering letter written by Camden and a reply-paid envelope. All questionnaires were returned to Acuity.

After two weeks, Acuity sent any tenant who had not responded a full survey pack. The final closing date for the survey was extended to 31 December 2019, when the final questionnaires were sent for data entry.

## 1.3 Questionnaire design

A STAR questionnaire was designed for the TMO survey, comprising 34 questions in a 7-page booklet.

## 1.4 Response rates and accuracy

A census of all TMO residents were surveyed, of whom 272 responded in total. When the data is analysed for the Abbey Road TMO (Abbey Road and 135 – 179 Belsize Road), 62 out of the 241 residents responded – a 26% response rate. This response was high enough to conclude that any figures quoted at this level are accurate to within +/-10.7% at the 95% confidence interval.



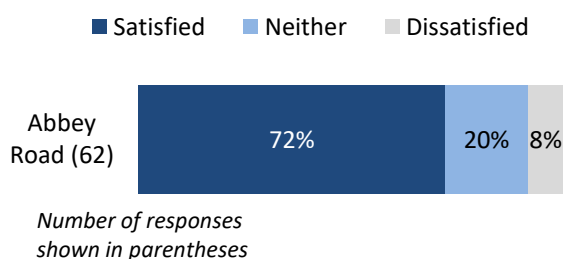
## 2. Overall satisfaction with the TMO

The following sections look at the results from the Abbey Road TMO survey. In this section, the overall satisfaction rating for TMO services is examined, alongside satisfaction with the home and value for money. As this is the first TMO report, a comparison with previous surveys is not possible. This section examines the overall rating for TMO services that is often seen as the headline figure in the survey.

### 2.1 Overall services

Tenants were asked, 'Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your TMO?' Almost two-thirds of all residents (72%) are satisfied with their TMO. A further 20% of residents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 8% are actually dissatisfied with the service provided by the Abbey Road TMO.

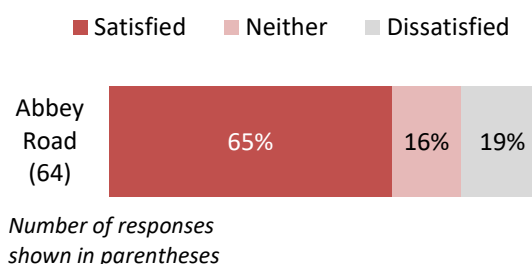
**Figure 2.1: Satisfaction with services provided by TMO**



### 2.2 Overall quality of the home

Two-thirds of all Abbey Road TMO residents are satisfied with the overall quality of the home (65%). Around a fifth indicated that they are dissatisfied however, with 16% neutral on the quality of their home.

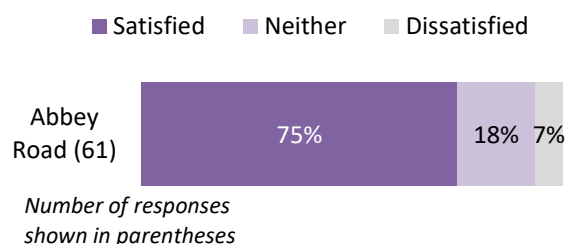
**Figure 2.2: Satisfaction with the overall quality of the home**



### 2.3 Value for money of rent

Three-quarters (75%) of residents are satisfied that their rent provides value for money. By contrast, just 7% of all residents are dissatisfied, with a large number neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (18%).

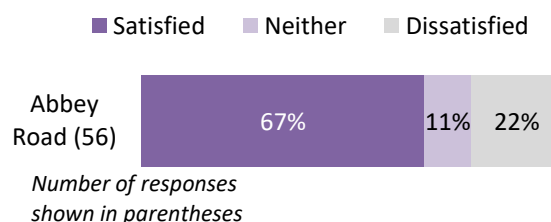
**Figure 2.3: Satisfaction with value for money of rent**



### 2.4 Value for money of the service charge

Two-thirds of residents consider themselves satisfied that their service charges represent value for money (67%). Just over a fifth are dissatisfied (22%) and around one in ten neither satisfied or dissatisfied (11%).

**Figure 2.4: Satisfaction with value for money of the service charge**





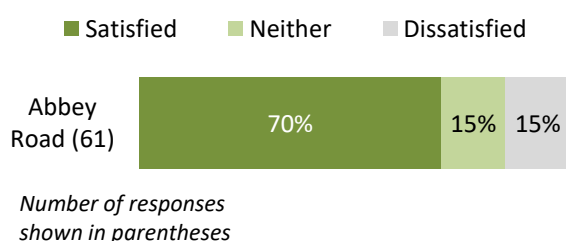
### 3. Neighbourhood

Camden is an inner London authority with a diverse population. It is committed to providing a safe and attractive environment by building and strengthening communities and supporting individual residents. This section looks at residents' satisfaction with estate services and the neighbourhood as a place to live.

#### 3.1 A place to live

More than two-thirds of all residents (70%) are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. While one in seven are either not happy with their neighbourhood (15%) or unsure (15%) at Abbey Road TMO.

**Figure 3.1: Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live**



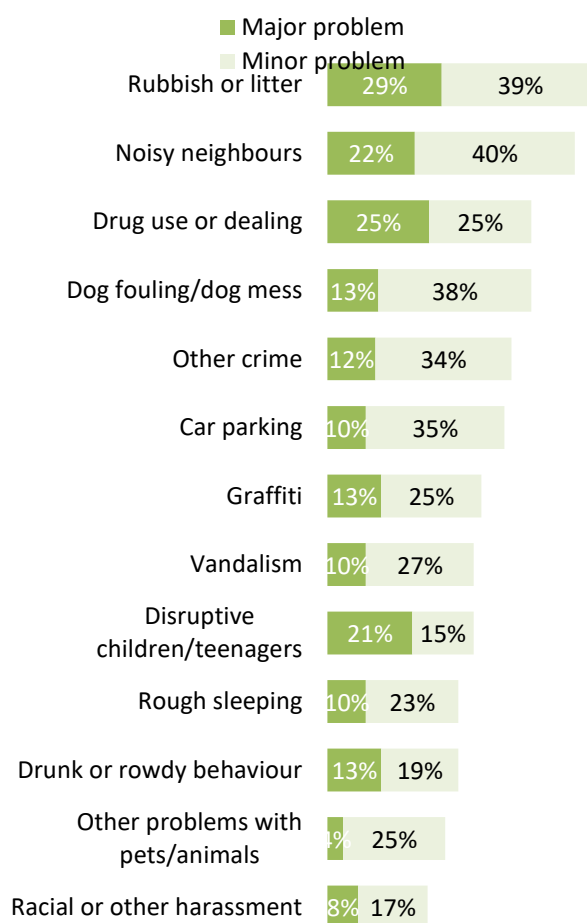
#### 3.2 Local problems

Residents were asked to what extent they considered a range of issues were a problem (either major or minor) or not, in their neighbourhood.

Figure 3.2 shows that the biggest issue indicated by 71% of the respondents, is rubbish or litter (68%), followed by noisy neighbours (62%). Problems with drug use or dealing and dog fouling / dog mess are problems for around half of the residents.

Just a few local problems are major problems for over a fifth of residents – disruptive children/teenagers, drug use or dealing, noisy neighbours and rubbish (21% to 29%).

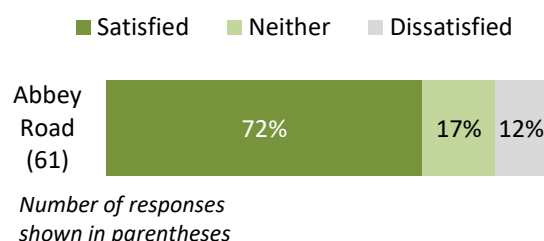
**Figure 3.2: Local problems (minor and major) all residents**



#### 3.3 Overall appearance of the neighbourhood

The percentage of all residents indicating their satisfaction with the overall appearance of their neighbourhood (72%), is slightly higher than for the neighbourhood as a place to live. With just over one in ten residents dissatisfied, and 17% neutral.

**Figure 3.3: Satisfaction with the appearance of the neighbourhood**



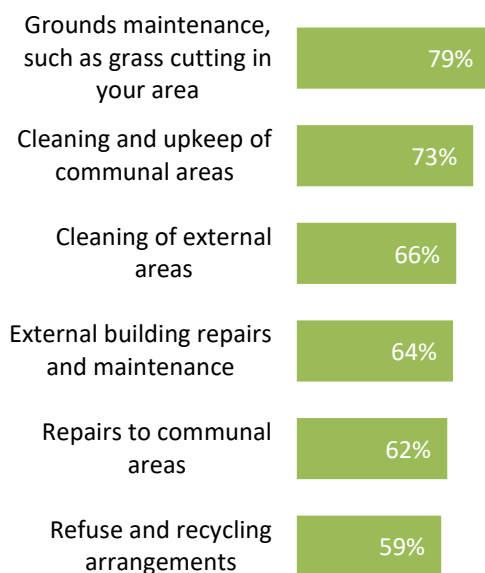


### 3.4 External services

Residents were asked to think about the property or block that they live in, and to rate their satisfaction for the cleaning and upkeep of communal areas, external building repairs and maintenance, grounds maintenance (such as grass cutting), repairs to communal areas, refuse and cleaning of external areas and recycling arrangements.

Four out of five of residents are satisfied with grounds maintenance (such as grass cutting). The cleaning and upkeep of communal areas is also rated fairly highly (73%), and above those for the repairs to communal areas, external building repairs and maintenance were considered satisfactory and refuse and recycling arrangements (59% to 66%).

**Figure 3.4: Satisfaction with external services**



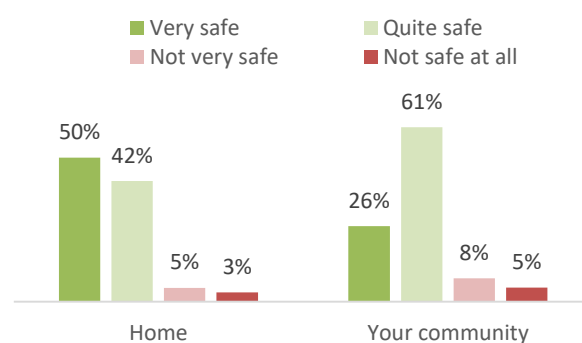
### 3.5 Feeling safe

Residents were asked to indicate how safe they feel in both their home and their community. The majority of residents (92%) feel safe in their home. Slightly more feel very safe rather than

quite safe. Of those who do not feel safe, most do not feel very safe (5% feel not very safe and 2% don't feel safe at all).

Almost nine out of ten residents (87%) feel safe in their community, although most feel quite safe rather than very safe. Some 8% of residents do not feel very safe and 5% do not feel safe at all.

**Figure 3.5: Feeling safe in the home and community**



Reasons given by Abbey Road residents for not feeling safe

Afraid of fire and evacuation.

As it is a tower block not safe due to fire risks.

In the past 1 resident smacked my hand and threatened my small children at the time. Police were involved as well as the co-op. The same resident turned again on another resident in the park a few years later after my incident. That is why I put quite safe.

Lots of strangers round the building and inside they smoke drugs on the stair, I see someone homeless people stealing bikes and that's not safe for my kids and others living in the Caster Bridge.

Neighbour threatened to blow up the block.

Since I was burgled in 1982-1983 I feel safe only when the lift is banging outside I become scared.

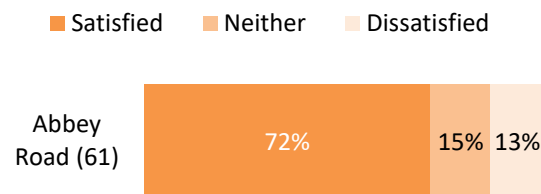


## 4. Repairs and maintenance service

Repairs and maintenance of properties are an important part of property management. This section looks residents' satisfaction with the way that their TMO deals with repairs and maintenance.

Almost three-quarters of residents (72%) are satisfied with their TMO repairs and maintenance service. However, 13% of residents are dissatisfied, with a further 15% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service.

**Figure 4.1: Satisfaction with TMO repairs and maintenance service**



*Number of responses  
shown in parentheses*





## 5. Contact and communication

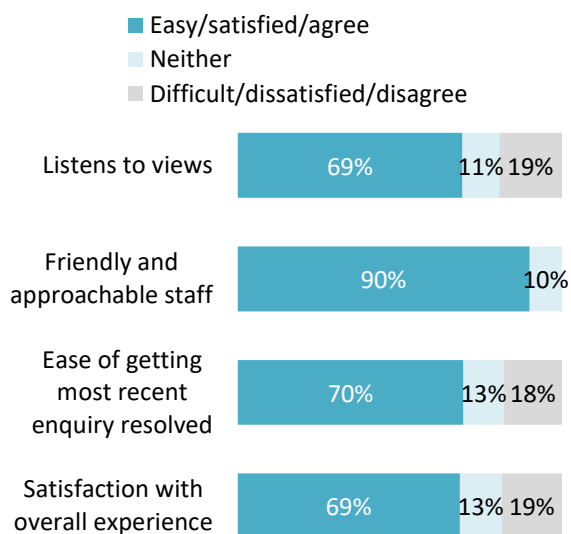
Providing excellent customer service and communicating well is a fundamental part of tenant management services. This section examines the residents' perception of customer service and the level of satisfaction they have with how their TMO communicates with them and the residents' perception of customer service and communication with Camden Council.

### 5.1 Contact with the TMO

Staff at the TMO are clearly very friendly and approachable – receiving a very high rating of 90%.

Over two thirds of residents are satisfied that Abbey Road TMO listens to their views and acts on them, find it easy to get their most enquiry resolved and are satisfied with the overall experience when they last contacted the TMO (69% - 70%). However, it is important to note that around a fifth of residents are dissatisfied in these three areas (18% to 19%).

**Figure 5.1: Satisfaction with contacting the TMO**



### 5.2 Satisfaction with TMO newsletter

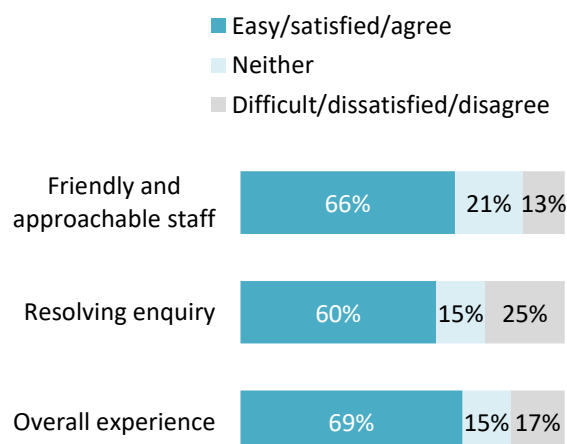
Residents were asked to think about the information and advice they receive from their TMO and to say how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the TMO newsletter. Two-thirds of residents are satisfied with their TMO newsletter (66%). A quarter of residents are neither satisfied or dissatisfied (24%) and 10% are dissatisfied with this publication.

### 5.3 Contact Camden Council's Housing Service

Two-thirds of residents agree that Camden Council's staff are friendly and approachable (66%). Some 13% of residents disagree and a fifth of residents has no view on this statement, and may not have dealt with Council staff.

Three out of five residents who had made an enquiry, said that it was fairly or very easy to resolve (60%). A quarter of residents said that there was some level of difficulty involved (25%). The majority of respondents are satisfied with the experience (69%), while 17% are dissatisfied with the experience.

**Figure 5.2: Satisfaction when contacting Camden Council's Housing Service**





## 6. Recommending Camden Council and the TMO

The survey asked residents how likely they would be to recommend services provided by their TMO, and housing services provided by Camden Council. These questions allow insight into the general attitude of residents towards their service providers, and the extent to which they feel engaged as a 'customer'. This section explores the response to these questions.

The Net Promoter Score, or NPS®, is based on the fundamental perspective that every company's customers can be divided into three categories: Promoters, Passives and Detractors.

By asking one simple question, for example, 'How likely is it that you would recommend your TMO to a friend or colleague?' it is possible to then track these groups and get a clear measure of the organisation's performance through its residents' eyes. Residents respond on a 0-to-10-point rating scale and are categorised as follows:

**Promoters** (score 9-10) are loyal enthusiasts who will promote and support the TMO, increasing their reputation.

**Passives** (score 7-8) are satisfied but unenthusiastic residents who can easily become detractors depending on circumstances.

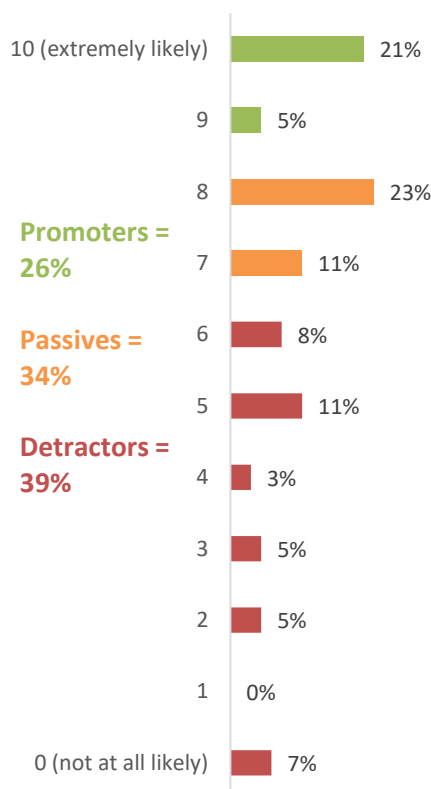
**Detractors** (score 0-6) are unhappy customers who can damage the organisation and hold back development and growth through negative word-of-mouth.

The actual Net Promoter Score is calculated as the percentage promoters minus the percentage detractors.

### 6.1 Recommending the TMO

Figure 6.1 shows the recommendation scores for all residents, regarding the Abbey Road TMO. A quarter of residents (26%) are very likely to recommend their TMO to family or friends (scoring 9 or 10) and would therefore be considered promoters. However, a total of 39% scored their TMO between 0 and 6, and would therefore be detractors. Passive residents (scoring 7 or 8) make up 34% of the responses. The Net Promoter Score for the TMO is -16.

**Figure 6.1: Recommendation scores for the TMO**



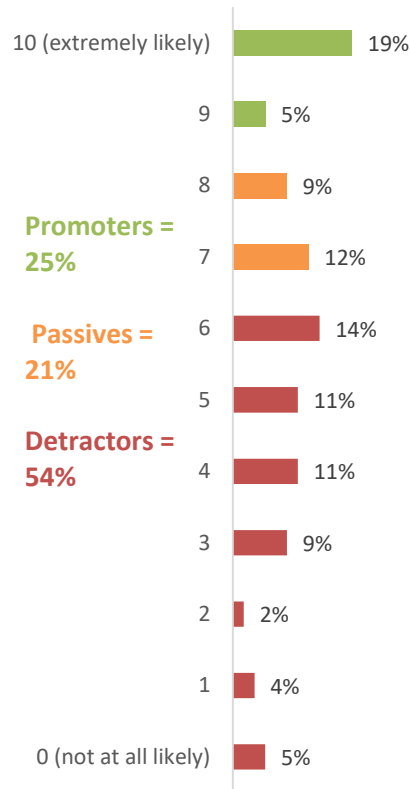
### 6.2 Recommending Camden Council Housing Services

A quarter of residents (25%) are very likely to recommend Camden Council to family or friends (scoring 9 or 10) and would therefore be considered



promoters. The percentage scoring between 0 and 6 (and therefore, detractors) is 54%. Passive residents (scoring 7 or 8) make up 21% of the responses. The Net Promoter Score for Camden Council Housing Services from Abbey Road TMO residents is: -30.

**Figure 6.2: Recommendation scores for Camden Council Housing Services**





## 7. Service priorities and residents' comments

### 7.1 Residents priorities

The following analysis of results is based on just one question asking residents to prioritise different landlord services by identifying their top three. The results indicate which services are most important to residents, so that they can be targeted for improvement.

Tenants were asked to identify and prioritise from a list, which three services they felt were the most important services.

**Figure 3.1: How Abbey Road TMO residents prioritise services**



Repairs and maintenance service and the safety and security of residents' home and neighbourhood are by far the most important service for residents – with over half of residents rating each as one of their top three services. The quality of the home and value for money are priorities for just over a third of residents, with listening to residents, providing support and being kept informed important for an or more quarter of residents.

### 7.2 Residents comments

Residents were asked if they would like to comment on their TMO, Camden Council's Housing Service or their neighbourhood generally.

A total of 25 Abbey Road residents responded to this question and are shown in full below.

1) No follow up on jobs carried out, to ensure they are done correctly and to standard. 2) Takes too long to respond to critical repairs, such as leaks and blockages, when a leak occurred I had to wait one week. 3) Camden Council always hiring contractors who always do poor. 4) The handy man does not come frequently enough.

1) The estate cleaners do a very good job, but at weekends tenants are too lazy to open the rubbish bins and just dump it on the top or on the ground. The foxes, squirrels and birds then get the bags open and spread the rubbish. 2) Every night at least one person rifles through the rubbish bags. Sometimes on 3 occasions in one night, disturbing my sleep.

About the council, in Snowman House and Casterbridge we have suffered with windows for many years and still suffering, the lifts replacement was poor work, new lifts keep breaking, from the exterior they look like 10 years old, then front doors my goodness me, brand new doors you replaced them because they were not compatible with fire regulations and no one was persecuted for wasting millions of pounds. TV signal is poor, can't watch anything on free view, residential parking is more expensive every year (in three years it is gone like 30% up). It seems like you are trying to make money from residents from any possibility. There is so much to say from



frustration with Camden Council it will take me another one hour. About housing service: last year I've asked for valuation of my flat under right to buy, and the paper work I received it was like copy and paste from another valuation of my neighbour, didn't take into account the problem with windows (£30,000 disaster) when I tried to speak to housing officer I couldn't do so because it was only one person dealing with that and she was never available. Asbestos it is another major problem, for many years there was no information about asbestos, we have done a lot of repairs , drilling , sanding etc., only to find out this year (following tragedy of Grenfell Tower) that there is asbestos everywhere .

Camden CHS moved in year ago. Bathroom wall required painting, informed Camden repairs were to deal with it when visited, they acknowledged it then nothing. Called numerous times and still nothing.

Fix lights, doors, clean communal areas. Reported goings on to the police.

Francis and Carol are very helpful; very sad Carol has now left. They are very kind people.

I go to the housing coop

I have not had any problems with my neighbourhood. TMO Camden Council where always a housing service and always very helpful when I needed them.

I wish something would be done about the private tenants doing massive DIY. They should be dealt with more severely whatever the cause of disruption.

In out Lobby there has been a flashing light for the last 4 months also on the 12th floor flashing light, 2nd floor broken glass.

It has proved difficult to find the right person to talk to, who will take responsibly, although most staff I have talked to have been approachable and courteous.

Manager [name removed] at the TMO is the main issue. Over 90% of tenants in both Casterbridge and Snowman House have lodged complaints against this manager due to his lack of respect and ill-treatment towards tenants. He has a habit of refusing repair services to tenants and not following up and dealing with serious issues such as teenagers using drugs in our corridors. There issues of lighting on some of the floors that have been going on for the last two years and they are yet to be resolved. I have an issue with my chicken, toilets, boilers and windows for the last 5 years and they are yet to be addressed.

I do not understand why as a tenant, I am expected to pay service charges and yet to not receive any repair services when I need them. I have broken that window for the last 5 years and it is yet to be repaired. Manager Francis at this TMO needs to be removed or retrained.

Need front door and corridor to be painted please.

No light outside my flat [address removed]. Long time.

No white or Asian staff are employed by the TMO. Why is this? This is a matter which should be investigated as I believe this is blatant racism.

Please keep rent low for working people

Repairs to communal areas are reported but ignored. I'm not sure if this is the fault of the TMO or the council repairs service. We had new communal lighting installed in corridors a few years ago. The bulbs in these are now starting to flash and stop working. This is on multiple floors in my block. This has been reported multiple times but nothing has been done, Awful service. Our "new" lifts were damaged by the fire remedial works carried out. This damage to the interior of the lifts has not been repaired and the lifts now look in a worse state than the old ones. Again not sure if this is the responsibility of the TMO or council, but shows a lacklustre response to remedial works

The staff are very helpful, polite, caring, efficient and make sure repairs are done promptly and to a very high standard. The committee work hard and are helpful. Estate is kept clean and tidy. The staff solve problems when approached. The streets could be kept cleaner. I note the haphazard way the cleaners work. I suggest Camden should ask people to clear the leaves outside their property as they are very slippery.

The TMO needs a regular person on staff to deal with repairs. A part time person is no use as you have to wait to get the repairs done.

TMO and Camden not linked tight enough regarding noisy and racist neighbours.

TMO are generally okay. Don't feel they represent the tenants practically but better than full management by Camden. Waste management/litter is appalling since bins changed.

TMO is good. Camden Council, sometimes it takes time to be contacted but it is done only



in a certain time and follows up.  
Neighbourhood generally is not good.

We have problems with lifts, very often, and my main water tap is not working this office can't fix it and if I have any leak is a big problem.

Well done.

When dealing with TMO by email I have a positive response after dealing with a year of problems with window repairs. When dealing with Camden Council tax service it is a nightmare. When asking for support or information there is no transparency to the bills we receive I suspect fraud. When dealing with Camden repairs service they are fast and prompt but we still have a problem with our heating.





## 8. Comparison with other TMOs and Camden tenants

### 8.1 Comparison with other TMO residents

When the ratings for Abbey Road TMO are compared with the average ratings from residents at the four other TMOs the comparison reveals a mixed performance.

Abbey Road TMO residents awarded higher ratings for value for money (12% higher for the rent and 10% higher for the service charge. Higher ratings were also awarded for contact with the Council (6% to 9% higher) and the appearance of the neighbourhood (8% higher).

Similar levels of satisfaction with found in many other areas (3% lower to 4% higher). Abbey Road TMO residents did however award four ratings below the average of other TMO residents – quality of the home (6% lower) and aspects of estate services (cleaning and upkeep of communal areas (7% lower), cleaning of communal areas (9% lower) and refuse & recycling areas (13% lower)).

### 8.2 Comparison with Camden Council's tenants

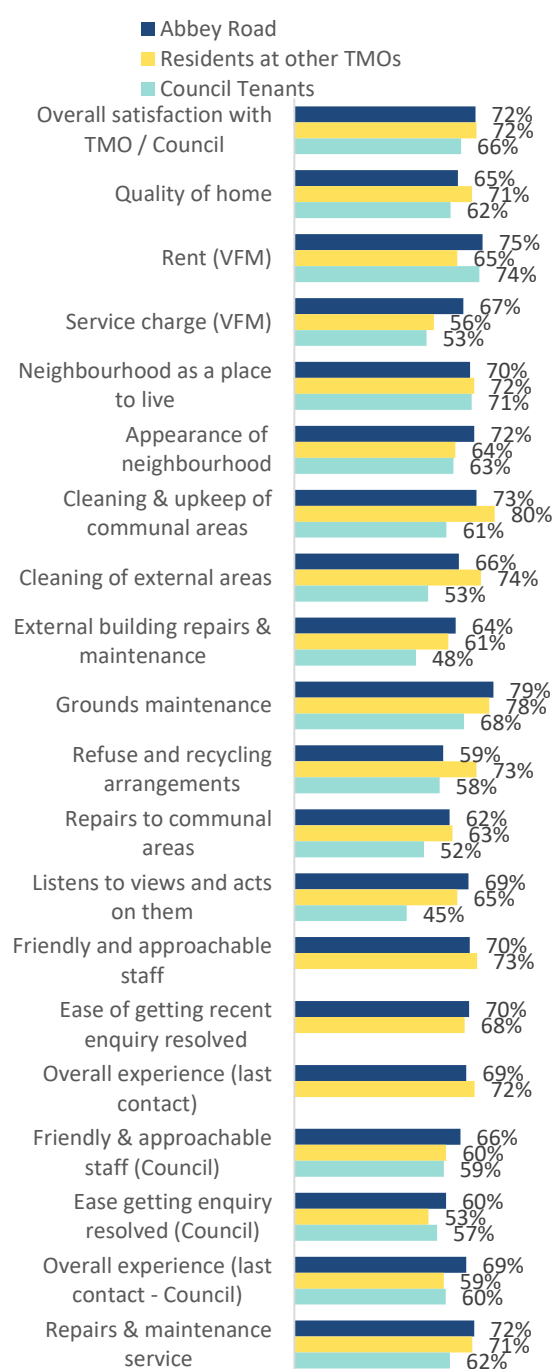
The survey found that Abbey Road TMO residents rated the overall services provided by their TMO (72%) some 6% higher than the equivalent rating for the Council's Housing Services (66% - general needs and Housing for Older People).

Many of the ratings awarded by Abbey Road TMO residents are considerably higher than the Council's tenant averages (8% to 25% higher).

Noticeable differences include the service charge (15% higher), external building maintenance (16%) and listening to views (25%).

In a few areas there was little difference with the Council's ratings – value for money of the rent, neighbourhood and refuse and recycling).

**Figure 8.1: Comparison with residents at other TMOs and the Council**

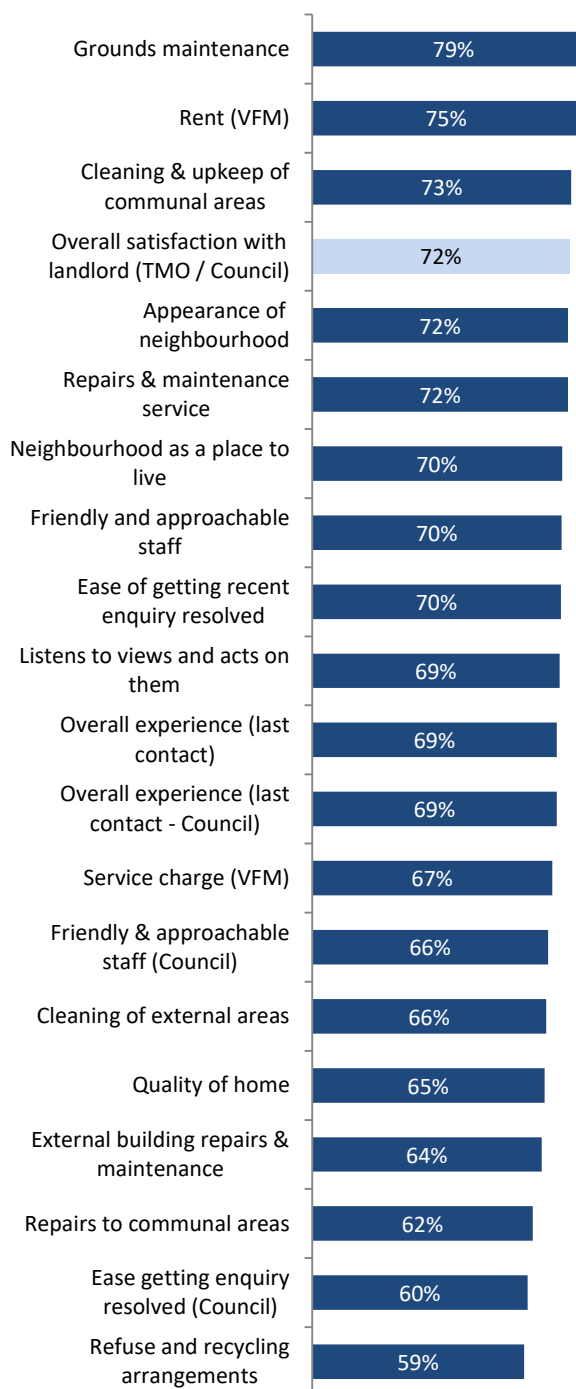




## 9. Summary

The results from the 2019 survey reveal that the majority of Abbey Road TMO residents are satisfied with the services provided by the TMO and the Council.

**Figure 9.1: Satisfaction with key services for all residents**



In total 62 out of 241 residents in the Abbey Road TMO completed the survey (26%). Almost three quarters of resident are satisfied with TMO services overall (72%), with higher ratings for ground maintenance, the value for money of the rent and the cleaning & upkeep of communal areas (73% to 79%).

Resident ratings for their home and services typically fell within the mid-60s to low 70s. Lower ratings were awarded for the repairs to communal areas, refuse & recycling arrangements and ease of getting enquiries resolved at the Council.

However, a number of residents are dissatisfied, quality of the home (19%), service charge (22%), estate services (cleaning and upkeep of communal areas (19%), repairs to communal areas (24%), cleaning of external areas (25%), refuse and recycling arrangements (22%)), contact with TMO (listens to views (19%), ease of resolving enquiries (18%) and overall experience (19%)) and contact with Council (ease of resolving enquiries (25%)).

The Repairs service and the safety and security of residents' home and neighbourhood are by far the most important priorities for residents. In terms of local problems, over a fifth or residents reported major problems with disruptive children/teenagers, drug use or dealing, noisy neighbours and rubbish (21% to 29%).

On a positive note Abbey Road residents appear to be generally more satisfied than Council tenants. They are more positive about their TMO compared with other TMO residents in most areas. Although it is interesting that this was not the case for the quality and some aspects of estate services – suggesting areas the TMO might consider reviewing, alongside some of the comments made by residents.





## About Acuity

Acuity Research & Practice provide resident satisfaction survey and benchmarking services, helping housing providers to improve services and engage with their residents through an understanding of satisfaction, performance and profiling data.

We focus on providing information that will inform performance improvement: positive outcomes for providers and residents, not just box-ticking. Our services are highly flexible, always carefully tailored to the requirements and budgets of our customers.

We have been providing consultancy services to the social housing sector for over 21 years. We work in partnership with HouseMark to support the benchmarking activities of smaller and specialist housing providers.

