



Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA)

2014 STAR Customer Satisfaction Survey Report

November 2014

Customer Survey 2014

Prepared for: Islington & Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA)

By: Acuity

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Produced by Acuity

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Summary

Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA) commissioned Acuity to carry out a STAR survey. ISHA general needs and sheltered housing residents, as well as Lien Viet owned and managed stock, were included in the postal survey. The survey took place between October and November 2014.

The results from the 2014 survey are encouraging with many ratings remaining close to the high levels achieved in 2011.

Key findings

Housing and Services

The vast majority of ISHA's tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided by ISHA (80%), the quality of the home (80%) and condition of the home (79%).

Value for money

Almost three-quarters of tenants are satisfied with the value for money of their rent (73%).

Repairs and maintenance

Seven out of nine tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (78%) and even more are satisfied with the ability to make an appointment (87%).

The neighbourhood

Four-fifths of residents are satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live (80%).

Estate services

Just over three-fifths of residents are satisfied with grounds maintenance (62%), with over three-quarters satisfied with cleaning and upkeep of internal communal areas (77%) and 71% satisfied with upkeep of external areas.

Resident involvement

Over four-fifths of tenants are satisfied with being kept informed (81%) and two-thirds of tenants felt that ISHA listens to their views and acts upon them (66%).

Customer services

Seven out of nine tenants find ISHA staff friendly and approachable.

Over 90% of tenants and homeowners made

contact with ISHA in the last twelve months. The most usual method of contacting was by telephone.

Around three-quarters of tenants said that it was easy to get through to the right person at ISHA when they had a query (73%), and were able to deal with their problem (74%). Four out of five tenants found staff helpful (79%).

Almost three-quarters of tenants were satisfied that staff were able to deal with their query quickly and efficiently (74%), however fewer were satisfied with the final outcome (68%).

Communication and information

Around three-quarters of tenants (73%) and a third of homeowners (31%) find ISHA News useful.

Consultation preferences for tenants were for information to be sent by letter (73%), whereas the majority of homeowners would prefer information via email (73%).

Internet

Over two-thirds of ISHA's tenants (69%) and all homeowners (100%) have access to the internet - either at home (62% and 98%) and/or outside the home (18% and 53%).

The percentage of tenants (69%) with internet access is much lower than the national average of 84% of households having internet access (Office for National Statistics – August 2014).

Service priorities

Repairs and maintenance were clearly the topmost priority for tenants (77%), with overall quality of the home (54%) and value for money of the (40%) second and third.

For homeowners the three top priorities were

repairs and maintenance (84%), quality of home (60%) and listening to views and acting upon them (55%).

Improving the service

When asked to name the one thing that they would like to see ISHA improve, around a third of tenants would like ISHA to bring their properties up-to-date with replacement kitchens, bathrooms, doors, windows and heating (30%).

Around one in seven tenants would like improvements in security in their neighbourhood, lighting and CCTV (14%). Provision of local facilities was mentioned by 4% of tenants, with emphasis on dealing with bin areas, rubbish collection and areas for storing bikes/buggies/prams etc.

About one in eight tenants would like improved communal cleaning and decoration and maintenance of internal and external buildings (12%).

More efficient tenancy management in respect of assisting with transfers and lowering rents was mentioned by 7% of tenants. 4% of comments related to tenant services such as help for older residents, provision of a decorating service and shower facilities.

A few residents mentioned that they would like to see improvements in customer services (3%) and with communications and information (2%).

Change in satisfaction

When the results from 2014 are compared alongside those from 2011 there is a notable downward trend; however, most of the differences fall within the margin of error for combining the two surveys (around $\pm 7\%$ for tenants and $\pm 17\%$ for homeowners).

The aspect that fell outside this margin in tenant satisfaction was overall quality of repair work, which has gone down by 11% since 2011.

When looking at the ratings over the last six

years there has been a steady decline in satisfaction with overall landlord services, quality of home and repairs and maintenance.

Advice and support

Over a quarter of tenants expressed interest in receiving more information on the employment training service that ISHA offers (27%), while a third or more were interested in more information on housing advice and support (38%), health and wellbeing (35%) and group activities (32%).

Future plans

Around a quarter of tenants (22%) and homeowners (26%) indicated that they are likely to move from their current home in the next three years. Over a third of tenants would like to continue renting from ISHA but in a different property/location, whereas a fifth would rent from the Council (21%) and a lower number would rent from another housing association (15%).

Homeowners

Homeowners (leaseholders and shared owners) gave much lower ratings for services overall than tenants - which is quite usual across the country. The homeowner questionnaire dealt with aspects specific to this tenure covering value for money for the service charge and the sales process.

Over half of homeowners are satisfied with the value for money of the service charge (51%). In respect of service charge administration - the setting and calculation of service charges and the clarity of the statement - satisfaction ratings ranged from 24% to 52%.

Over half of homeowners were also satisfied with the information and advice provided regarding their obligations under the terms and conditions of the lease (53%). Over a quarter of homeowners found ISHA's website a useful source of information (28%)

Satisfaction ratings ranged from 29% in respect of satisfaction with the shared ownership sales

process, up to 60% for the information received about what it means to become a shared owner.

Half of ISHA's shared owners (48%) would recommend shared ownership to family or friends and a third or more have already done so (35%).

Sub-groups

There was quite a variance in satisfaction levels in the different local areas, however local area 5 tenants more often than not gave the lowest ratings out of all the areas - particularly for repairs and maintenance, although on occasions local area 4 tenants were the least satisfied. Local area 1 tenants gave the most top satisfaction ratings.

Within the boroughs Hackney and Islington tenants were generally more satisfied than tenants in Waltham Forest - especially in respect of repairs and maintenance - however Waltham Forest tenants were the most satisfied in respect of condition of home and neighbourhood as a place to live.

Areas of dissatisfaction

There were a number of areas where more than one in ten residents are dissatisfied and these have been highlighted as areas which ISHA may wish to investigate further.

Key driver analysis

Key driver analysis reveals that the most important drivers of satisfaction are the repairs and maintenance service, closely followed by neighbourhood as a place to live and friendly and approachable staff. These three key areas along with condition and quality of home, all have a strong relationship with overall satisfaction ratings.

Comparison with other landlords

When measured against HouseMark's averages for London landlords ISHA's performance is above average in all areas except neighbourhood as a place to live and value for money of rent, however neither fall into the bottom quartile.

Recommendations

The survey found a number of areas which ISHA may wish to investigate further.

Repairs and maintenance - Tenants gave some high ratings for aspects of repair work carried out, however there were significantly high dissatisfaction ratings for repair being "right first time" (26%), speed of completion of repair work (17%) and overall quality of repair (17%). Improvements in these aspects will have a very positive effect on overall tenant satisfaction.

Estate services/Grounds maintenance -

This service area received much lower satisfaction ratings than other services and some high levels of dissatisfaction (11% up to 17% dissatisfied).

Customer services – ISHA need to keep monitoring this service with the awareness that many residents find it difficult to contact staff, find them unhelpful or not able to deal with requests quickly and efficiently. One of the key drivers of satisfaction with customer services is the speed and efficiency with which queries are handled and dealt with.

Listening to views and acting upon them –

Not all residents feel that the association listens to their views and acts upon them. Although many residents are neutral on this issue, 15% of tenants are dissatisfied. It is recommended that ISHA review their approach for capturing resident views and the methods for providing feedback to see what other initiatives could be used to improve satisfaction levels. Tenants will respond to this question in different ways and could relate to any of the different services provided by ISHA; in many cases there is a correlation with repairing issues.

Different resident groups - It is recommended that the organisation should do some further work with homeowners and other subgroups (particularly local areas 4 and 5) in the tenant population to investigate possible reasons for the lower levels of satisfaction in some service areas.

