

## **Scrutiny Question: How have YHN and NCC prepared to comply with the requirements to meet the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)?**

### **1. Why we chose to scrutinise this topic**

The Grenfell Tower disaster, which claimed the lives of 72 people in June 2017, was the catalyst for a major overhaul of regulation of the social housing sector. As part of that overhaul a new Regulatory Standard is being introduced to assess how each social landlord (with over 1,000 properties) is performing in terms of service delivery.

As of April 2023, social landlords will be obliged to start gathering data on Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). From April 2024, these will then form part of their compliance with Consumer Standards, making the TSM the fifth Consumer Standard, which the Regulator is gaining new powers to enforce. (Please see appendix A for a list of the TSM.)

SIFT members wanted to assess what action both YHN, as the council's managing agent and NCC, as the landlord, had put in place to get ready to comply with the requirements of the new Standard.

### **2. Scope of the Review**

SIFT set a clear scope for the scrutiny, which is:

- To review the activity YHN and NCC have undertaken to make staff and customers aware of the new requirements of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- To assess how the Tenant Satisfaction Measures have been trialled
- To explore how tenants have been involved in trialling the TSMs
- To assess how ready YHN and NCC will be to report the results for the TSMs
- To recommend changes to policy and practice where required.

### **3. How we scrutinised this service area**

During this scrutiny we completed a number of activities to gather evidence, these included:

Briefing by lead officers (Emily Sinclair from YHN and Matt Thornhill from NCC)

Reviewing the new TSM standards

Looking at changes to the way Regulation will be conducted

Exploring the results of the TSM survey

Exploring the methodologies used for the TSM survey trial

Identifying how tenants have been involved in looking at the new requirements

Exploring what roles YHN and NCC have been responsible for in recording the TSMs

To assess how YHN and NCC will monitor ongoing progress in reporting the TSMs and setting in place methods to continuously improve service delivery.

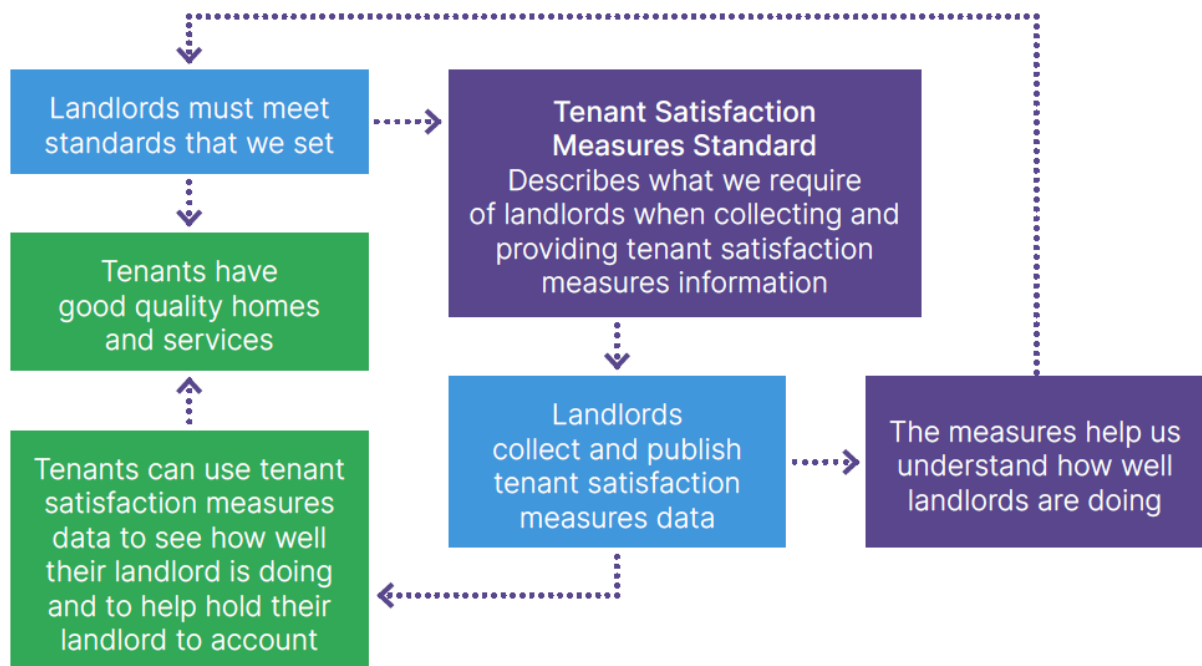
#### 4. Equality Impact Assessment

SIFT members considered the nine protected characteristics contained within the Equality Act 2010 to assess if any people or groups would be negatively impacted by carrying out this scrutiny topic. SIFT does not consider that any internal or external groups would be negatively impacted by the scrutiny.

#### 5. Briefing by Emily Sinclair and Matthew Thornhill

The presentation to SIFT members took place using Zoom on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> January during which Emily Sinclair, Customer Insight and Engagement Manager of YHN and Matt Thornhill, Housing Partnerships Officer of NCC gave a presentation on the implementation of the TSM, followed by a question and answer session.

The following diagram was used by Emily and Matt to explain how the TSM are intended to work (start at the large purple box in the centre).



Emily and Matt explained that in total there are 22 TSM – 10 are measures that the landlord should collect using data they have access to, and which are monitored on a regular basis, and 12 that are tenant perception measures. A tenant perception measure assesses how the tenant feels about, for example, how the landlord deals with anti-social behaviour, or delivers its repair service.

YHN decided to test the TSM by conducting a ‘Your Home, Your Voice survey, which would incorporate the TSM questions but also gather other data about the respondents, for example, which languages were spoken in the home, any support needed and whether tenants feel listened to by YHN and NCC.

The government has laid down guidance about how many responses are required from each social landlord to ensure the results are statistically valid. In Newcastle's case with over 25,000 properties, the requirement for responses was 2,200 completed surveys.

To ensure that tenants were aware of the introduction of the TSM YHN ran a campaign in the six months leading up to launching the survey to update customer contact details and 4,500 tenancy records were updated from this campaign.

In addition a comprehensive series of articles in Homes and People magazine were published, staff information sessions were conducted, and a social media campaign launched to help tenants find out about the approaching changes.

NCC works through YHN to keep tenants informed and have worked with its Communications Team to inform tenants about the changes as the April 'go live date' approaches. NCC internal staff have regularly discussed the TSMs and officers have been briefing the NCC Executive Team as well as liaising across to the YHN Executive Team.

YHN used four different methods to help tenants complete the survey, they contacted tenants by:

- Email (managed by YHN)
- Text (managed by YHN)
- Phone call (managed by Social Engine, a company contracted by YHN)
- Post (managed by Social Engine).

To increase response rates YHN also:

- Carried out door knocking
- Engaged with community groups to raise awareness
- Produced an easy read version
- Worked with Housing Plus staff in supported accommodation to encourage customers to take part.

The survey received 5,020 responses which included an 18 percent response rate from the total tenant population.

The response rate per contact method was:

- Email 65%
- Text 23%
- Phone call 8%
- Post 4%.

NCC's and YHN's next steps to assess the results of the survey include reviewing the results of the TSMs, reporting the results to tenants and staff, creating action plans to respond to the insight gathered from the trial survey and procuring a partner to undertake the perception survey.

## 6. Changes to Regulation

In reshaping consumer regulation, the Regulator is working on the basis that its Consumer Regulation should aim to deliver the following outcomes. These are based on the Regulator's fundamental objectives and the expectations in the Social Housing White Paper, The Charter for Social Housing Residents, which can be delivered through regulation.

- a) Social housings is well managed
- b) Tenants' complaints are dealt with efficiently and effectively
- c) Tenants are treated with fairness and respect and their diverse needs are taken into account
- d) Social housing stock meets the Decent Homes Standard
- e) Landlords ensure social housing meets health and safety requirements and consider safety in the management of housing
- f) Landlords comply with tenancy law and regulations and avoid unnecessary evictions
- g) Tenants have access to information to hold their landlords to account
- h) Tenants have opportunities to influence the decisions and priorities of their landlords with respect to their housing
- i) Landlords take account of the views of tenants in the management of their homes
- j) Landlords work with other agencies to contribute to the safety and wellbeing of the areas in which the homes they are responsible for are situated.

YHN and NCC will need to develop monitoring systems to ensure that the objectives (a) to (j) above are achieved consistently and meet tenants' and the Regulator's expectations.

## 7. Survey Results

### TP01: Overall satisfaction

Total responses	No. responses
4693	
Very satisfied	1359
Fairly satisfied	1689
Neither	777
Fairly dissatisfied	476
Very dissatisfied	392

**Satisfaction – 64.9%**

**Dissatisfaction – 18.5%**

### TP02: Satisfaction with overall repairs service

Total	No. responses
3158	
Very satisfied	1099
Fairly satisfied	932
Neither	337
Fairly dissatisfied	375
Very dissatisfied	415

**Satisfaction – 64.3%**

**Dissatisfaction – 25%**

### TP03: Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair

Total	No. responses
3157	
Very satisfied	1060
Fairly satisfied	807
Neither	324
Fairly dissatisfied	349
Very dissatisfied	617

**Satisfaction – 59.1%**

**Dissatisfaction – 30.5%**

**TP04: Satisfaction that the home is well-maintained**

	No. responses
Total 5002	
Very satisfied	1456
Fairly satisfied	1698
Neither	755
Fairly dissatisfied	539
Very dissatisfied	553
<b>Satisfaction – 63.1%</b>	
<b>Dissatisfaction – 21.8%</b>	

**TP05: Satisfaction that the home is safe**

	No. responses
Total 4993 (4898)	
Very satisfied	1609
Fairly satisfied	1727
Neither	652
Fairly dissatisfied	435
Very dissatisfied	475
N/A	95
<b>Satisfaction – 68.1%</b>	
<b>Dissatisfaction – 18.6%</b>	

**TP06: Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them**

	No. responses
Total 4723 (4413)	
Very satisfied	873
Fairly satisfied	1291
Neither	1228
Fairly dissatisfied	439
Very dissatisfied	582
N/A	310
<b>Satisfaction – 49%</b>	
<b>Dissatisfaction – 23.1%</b>	

**TP07: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them**

	No. responses
Total 4726 (4514)	
Very satisfied	1178
Fairly satisfied	1489
Neither	1161
Fairly dissatisfied	290
Very dissatisfied	396
N/A	212
<b>Satisfaction – 59.1%</b>	
<b>Dissatisfaction – 15.2%</b>	

**TP08: Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect**

	No. responses
Total 4724 (4589)	
Strongly agree	1136
Agree	1991
Neither	958
Disagree	252
Strongly disagree	252
N/A	135
<b>Satisfaction - 66.1%</b>	
<b>Dissatisfaction – 10.9%</b>	

**TP09: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of complaints**

Total	No. responses
1360	
Very satisfied	146
Fairly satisfied	263
Neither	248
Fairly dissatisfied	323
Very dissatisfied	380

**Satisfaction – 30%**

**Dissatisfaction – 51.7%**

**TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well-maintained**

Total	No. responses
1555	
Very satisfied	504
Fairly satisfied	452
Neither	228
Fairly dissatisfied	197
Very dissatisfied	174

**Satisfaction – 61.4%**

**Dissatisfaction – 23.9%**

**TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods**

Total	No. responses
4718 (4416)	
Very satisfied	921
Fairly satisfied	1450
Neither	1291
Fairly dissatisfied	377
Very dissatisfied	377
N/A	302

**Satisfaction – 53.6%**

**Dissatisfaction – 17.1%**

**TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour**

Total	No. responses
4882	
Very satisfied	1114
Fairly satisfied	1206
Neither	1709
Fairly dissatisfied	405
Very dissatisfied	448

**Satisfaction – 47.5%**

**Dissatisfaction – 17.5%**

**See Appendix B for statistics on the demographic profile of respondents.**

## 8. Benchmarking

SIFT members assessed articles in the Housing press to carry out research into what other landlords were doing to trial the TSM.

New research by data and insight company Housemark has shed some light on what may happen once English social landlords start collecting new performance data for the Regulator.

The Housemark research combined early results from 100 social landlords that are already gathering the data in preparation for the new regime.

The results showed some interesting areas where performance may need to improve to satisfy requirements. The research showed that overall tenant satisfaction has decreased by around five percentage points since 2020 to 79 percent today. YHN's rating in this category was 64.9 percent.

Complaint-handling looks like an area of weakness, with only 56 percent of residents satisfied with their landlord's performance. YHN's rating was 30 percent.

Anti-social behaviour is also an area where improvement may be required, with 60 percent satisfied with how this issue was being dealt with. SIFT members feel that ASB is such a broad range of activities, from graffiti to drug dealing that it is hard to assess how tenants can grade this activity. In addition the tolerance levels of people to ASB can vary hugely. YHN's rating in this category was 47.5 percent.

Fewer than 66 percent of residents feel that their landlord listens to their views and is minded to act on them. YHN's rating was 49 percent.

Interestingly 83 percent of tenants said their landlord treats them fairly and with respect. YHN's rating was 66.1 percent.

A total of 75 percent said they are kept informed about the things that matter to them. YHN's rating was 59.1 percent.

The research found that landlords are performing well on all safety measures, with a median score of 100 percent on all five areas.

However, only 83 percent of tenants said they are satisfied that their home is safe. YHN's rating in this category was 68.1 percent. SIFT members questioned how tenants judged this category: did they judge, for example, the safety of the electric wiring or the risk of being burgled? It would be interesting to assess how YHN's customers judged safety.

For non-emergency repairs, 85 percent are completed on time against landlord targets, but the average days to complete repairs has increased by 40 percent to around 14 days since 2020. YHN's rating was 64.3 percent.

## 9. Conclusions

Staff and tenants' awareness about the impending TSM was carried out in a comprehensive manner through the use of social media, the Homes and People publication and via briefings and meetings. The effectiveness of the awareness raising can be evidenced by the response rate to the survey at eighteen percent of the tenant population.

The methods used to encourage people to complete the survey were varied and tailored to the tenant's preferred way of communicating with YHN.

The survey was set up so that every tenant had their own unique link and survey ID number. YHN sent the individual links directly to the tenant, though there was an expectation that others may try to respond on the tenant's behalf, for example a couple might share an email address, or people might respond to their family member's post. YHN included the National Insurance number, name and date of birth in the survey to validate that the right person responded to the survey.

When YHN received the data back from the research company who was contracted to do certain aspects of the survey work, the data was sent back with the link and ID number so YHN could see where there were duplicate responses and the link had been used twice. When this occurred the second response was not included in the final count of respondents.

SIFT members were aware of a number of tenants who abandoned the survey at the point their NI number was asked for as they thought it was a scam. Indeed YHN, through its Chitchat social media page, has warned tenants to be careful about contacts allegedly from YHN as there has been a number of occasions when groups or individuals have purportedly been YHN staff asking for confidential information from a tenant in order to access bank details.

As the ID number and date of birth are used to identify the tenant completing the survey SIFT members feel that asking for the NI number of the individual may discourage a number of other people from taking part.



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Recommendations	Management Response	Proposed Actions	Timescale	Responsibility
1. The comprehensive method of raising awareness of the TSM should continue				
2. An article in Homes and People and on Chitchat should be published explaining the purpose of the TSM and why the data is collected				
3. The request for the NI number should not be included in the next survey				
4. The survey should only be completed once in any 12 month period				
5. YHN and NCC Should develop monitoring systems to ensure that the the Regulator's objectives are achieved consistently and meet tenants' and the Regulator's expectations.				



## Appendix A

TSMs generated from management information		TSMs collected from tenant perception surveys	
<b>CH01</b>	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	<b>TP01</b>	Overall satisfaction
<b>CH02</b>	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	<b>TP02</b>	Satisfaction with repairs
<b>NM01</b>	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord	<b>TP03</b>	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair
<b>RP01</b>	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	<b>TP04</b>	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained
<b>RP02</b>	Repairs completed within target timescale	<b>TP05</b>	Satisfaction that the home is safe
<b>BS01</b>	Gas safety checks	<b>TP06</b>	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
<b>BS02</b>	Fire safety checks	<b>TP07</b>	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them
<b>BS03</b>	Asbestos safety checks	<b>TP08</b>	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect
<b>BS04</b>	Water safety checks	<b>TP09</b>	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints
<b>BS05</b>	Lift safety checks	<b>TP10</b>	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained
		<b>TP11</b>	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
		<b>TP12</b>	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour



<b>Geographical area (Hub)</b>	<b>% YHN customers</b>	<b>% Survey responses</b>
<b>Kenton</b>	23.8%	23.1%
<b>Outer West</b>	20.7%	19.3%
<b>Walker</b>	20.4%	20.8%
<b>West End</b>	23.0%	23.4%
<b>East End</b>	12.2%	13.3%

Appendix B

<b>Age category</b>	<b>% YHN customers</b>	<b>% Survey responses</b>
<b>16-24</b>	2.9%	3.0%
<b>25-34</b>	13.3%	14.0%
<b>34-44</b>	19.6%	20.0%
<b>45-54</b>	19.4%	22.5%
<b>55-64</b>	19.5%	19.4%
<b>65-74</b>	13.5%	12.4%
<b>75+</b>	11.9%	8.8%

<b>Stock type</b>	<b>% YHN customers</b>	<b>% Survey responses</b>
General needs	93.9%	95.3%
Sheltered	3.0%	2.8%
Supported Living	0.5%	0.3%
Assisted Living	1.0%	0.3%
Housing Plus Community	1.5%	1.2%
Temp accommodation	0.1%	0.1%



Building type	% YHN customers	% Survey responses
House	53.8%	52.8%
Bungalow	7.0%	6.7%
High rise flat	12.3%	13.1%
Mid rise flat	13.9%	13.1%
Low rise flat	12.9%	14.2%
Room	0.1%	0.1%

Household size (number of people)	% YHN customers	% Survey responses
1	43.8%	39.6%
2	24.3%	25.7%
3	13.5%	14.6%
4	9.8%	11.1%
5	5.6%	5.6%
6+	3.0%	3.3%

Ethnic groups	% YHN customers	% Survey responses
<b>Asian or Asian British</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indian</li> <li>• Pakistani</li> <li>• Bangladeshi</li> <li>• Chinese</li> <li>• Any other Asian background</li> </ul>	5.5%	4.2%



Ethnic groups	% YHN customers	% Survey responses
<b>Black, Black British, Caribbean or African</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caribbean</li> <li>• African</li> <li>• Any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background</li> </ul>	4.9%	5.8%
<b>Mixed or multiple ethnic groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White and Black Caribbean</li> <li>• White and Black African</li> <li>• White and Asian</li> <li>• Any other Mixed or multiple ethnic background</li> </ul>	1.1%	2.3%
<b>Other ethnic group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arab</li> <li>• Any other ethnic group</li> </ul>	3.0%	4.1%
<b>White</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British Irish</li> <li>• Gypsy or Irish Traveller</li> <li>• Roma</li> <li>• Any other White background</li> </ul>	85.5%	83.7%