

Title: Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey Methodology

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1. Background

- 1.1. The Regulator of Social Housing has created a new system for assessing how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services, which came into effect from April 2023. There are twenty-two tenant satisfaction measures of which twelve will be measured through conducting tenant perception surveys. The Regulator has provided detailed guidance for how these are to be conducted in order to capture accurate, robust and representative satisfaction scores.
- 1.2. In the published requirements of the TSM survey the regulator states that *"It is ultimately the responsibility of Boards of private registered providers and governing bodies of local authority registered providers to ensure that the tenant perception TSMs are accurate and built on a survey methodology that meets the requirements"* (para 31).
- 1.3. The aim of this report is therefore to seek agreement from the Board that the choice of methodology for the TSM survey, which started in April 2023 and will run until March 2024, will ensure the results are accurate and will meet these requirements.
- 1.4. This report lists those requirements that most affect decisions around methodology. Most requirements in the guidance have been resolved through working with our telephone contractor Acuity, for example around structure of the questionnaire. The full 30 page list of requirements can be accessed from:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1140749/TSM_Tenant_survey_requirements.pdf

2. Trialling Different Approaches

- 2.1. To understand all the factors that need to be taken into consideration when planning our final approach for the TSM Surveys we piloted different combinations of the following methods during the 2022/23 year, which was before the survey became a regulatory requirement:
 - Online surveys sent by email and text messages.
 - Telephone surveys conducted by a third party contractor.
 - Postal surveys.

3. Statistical Accuracy

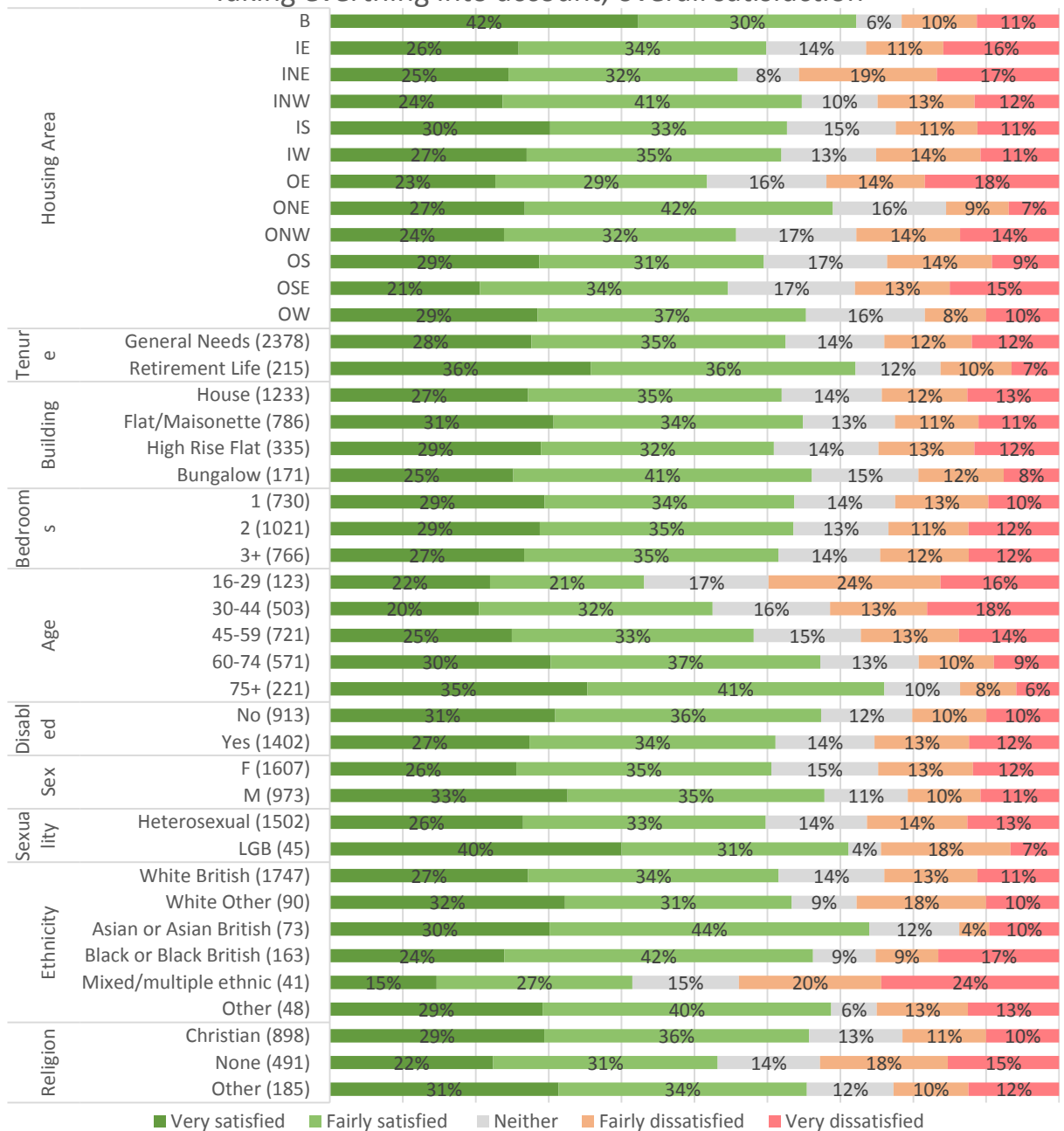
- 3.1. The survey requirements state: *"When undertaking a survey, providers must, as far as possible, generate a sample size for overall satisfaction (TP01) that meets the minimum level of statistical accuracy"* (para 42). For LCC (including BITMO) the margin of error listed is to be no more than +/-2% (at 95% confidence). This requires a sample of 2,300 survey completions per year.
- 3.2. **Survey quotas** have been designed to meet these requirements for LCC. BITMO have requested that we oversample this area to provide useful information at this subgroup level. This is allowed within the requirements, however we must apply a statistical weighting to take account of this:

Organisation	Population	Quarterly number of interviews	Quarterly margin of error	Annual number of interviews	Annual margin of error
LCC	52,633	555	±4.1%	2,220	±2.0%
BITMO	1,800	75	±11.1%	300	±5.2%
Total	54,433	630	±3.9%	2,520	±1.9%

4. Representativeness of responses

- 4.1. The survey requirements state: *"A survey that has met the sample size requirements can still be biased if groups of tenants who on average have higher satisfaction are over-represented"* (para 47). *"Providers must ensure that, as far as possible, survey responses used to calculate perception TSMs are representative of the relevant tenant population. Providers can meet this requirement through one of two routes:*
- a. **A representative sample:** This means there is no material under – or over – representation of tenant groups (compared to the relevant tenant population) that is likely to affect calculated satisfaction scores. Using this approach, providers must ensure that the achieved sample is representative of the relevant tenant population.*
- b. **Weighting responses:** If the achieved sample is not representative of the tenant population, then providers must appropriately weight the responses to ensure the TSMs reported are representative as far as possible."* (para 48)
- 4.2. We are working with the contractor to ensure that the survey responses are representative of the tenant population through targeting a representative sample (option a. above). As mentioned in 3.2 above a weighting will also be applied to take account of oversampling BITMO.
- 4.3. To understand which groups of tenants are most likely to affect satisfaction, the results from 2022/23 were considered by key groups – as shown in the following chart:

Taking everything into account, overall satisfaction



- 4.4. The characteristics that were found to most affect satisfaction scores, with the greatest differences between groups, were: Housing Area, Tenure (General Needs or Retirement Life) and Age. Other groups showing differences in satisfaction were seen to be either too small to be statistically significant (for example with mixed/multiple ethnicities) or linked to one of the above characteristics (in the case of Religion-None, which links strongly with younger tenants).
- 4.5. We have worked with the contractor to design a sampling approach that targets quotas of each of these key groups (Area, Tenure and Age) based on their proportions within the tenant profile. Survey completions from these groups in the overall survey response should be therefore representative of the tenant population. Since all characteristics are linked

to some extent with our chosen groups and the sampling is otherwise random, proportions of other groups should also reflect the tenant population. This will be monitored and reported as part of an assessment of representativeness (see item 6 below).

5. Survey collection method

- 5.1. Survey requirements: *"Providers must use an appropriate survey collection method or methods considering factors such as likely response rate, cost, addressing barriers to participation, tenant profile, and the representativeness of responses. As long the requirements of this document (and other applicable requirements) are met, providers can use any standard collection method including face-to-face, telephone, postal, or email/online delivery and may use more than one collection method."* (para 60) *"Providers must be able to demonstrate a rationale for the survey collection methods chosen with reference to the size and characteristics of their relevant tenant population."* (para 61)
- 5.2. The learning about the survey collection methods evaluated in the pilot survey 2022/23 was considered to assess each for suitability. These factors are explored in the following paragraphs.
- 5.3. **Representativeness** per method – table 2 below shows that responses from phone and online methods compared well with the tenant profile, whilst for postal surveys engagement was low for younger and high for older tenants, and Retirement Life tenants were greatly overrepresented.

Table 2. Response per method, by tenant characteristic (2022/23):

		Survey Responses				Tenants
		Online	Postal	Phone	All	
Age	18-39	21%	10%	23%	17%	26%
	40-59	43%	27%	35%	36%	40%
	60+	36%	63%	42%	46%	34%
Sex	F	65%	57%	65%	62%	61%
	M	35%	43%	35%	38%	39%
Sexuality	Heterosexual	97%	97%	98%	97%	98%
	LGB+	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Disabled	No	43%	34%	38%	39%	72%
	Yes	57%	66%	62%	61%	28%
Ethnicity	White:British	81%	85%	80%	82%	77%
	Ethnic Minority	19%	15%	20%	18%	23%
Religion	Christian	55%	63%	51%	57%	49%
	None	33%	27%	34%	31%	37%
	Other	13%	10%	15%	12%	14%
Number Of Bedrooms	1	26%	34%	27%	29%	28%
	2	42%	38%	43%	41%	41%
	3+	32%	29%	29%	28%	31%
Asset Type	Bedsit	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
	Bungalow	5%	10%	4%	7%	5%
	Flat	27%	31%	31%	28%	26%
	High Rise Flat	14%	12%	16%	14%	13%
	House	51%	45%	47%	49%	53%
	Maisonette	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Tenure	General Needs	96%	84%	96%	92%	92%
	Retirement Life	4%	16%	4%	8%	8%

- 5.4. **Cost** per method – Online surveys were found to have close to zero cost, postal surveys cost around £6 per completion and phone surveys cost a little more at around £9 per interview (depending on provider).
- 5.5. **Satisfaction** per method – Online surveys were found to attract lower levels of satisfaction (at 57%) than phone and postal methods (at 65% each). These findings are supported by HouseMark, who advise that satisfaction levels for online are around 10% lower than other methods.
- 5.6. Further considerations – we have seen increased engagement through online methods, which are simple, quick and easy to conduct – indicating an appetite for this method from our tenants. Phone surveys are limited in the number of questions that can be asked, to keep call times reasonable. However, a benefit of phone surveys is that it is possible to target quotas during the fieldwork phase to get a representative response.
- 5.7. **Agreed method for 2023/24** – Housing Leeds’ SMT considered a range of options based on the findings from 2022/23 and agreed to use a combination of online and phone methods. Using more than one method would give tenants a choice of preference and both methods were seen to attract a generally representative response from different groups. Also:
 - Carrying out phone surveys provides quick feedback, including to flag any issues that need urgent attention, and enables quotas to be set for key groups to further improve representativeness. The questions asked however needed to be limited to mostly those set by the regulator, to keep call times reasonable.
 - Including online surveys would reduce costs and enable further questions to be asked to provide additional insight, whilst offering a method that tenants find quick and convenient. The proportion of online surveys was limited to 20% of the overall response, to minimise any detrimental effect on overall satisfaction.
- 5.8. The accompanying **EDCI Impact Assessment** has been undertaken to evaluate this decision and confirm that the chosen survey methods are accessible to a range of protected characteristics. This provides detail around how potential barriers to engagement will be mitigated, including through conducting interviews at a range of times (daytimes, evenings and weekends) and offering interviews in BSL and different languages.

6. Assessing the method

- 6.1. The Regulator’s Survey Requirements state that: *"Providers must undertake reasonable checks for differences between total survey responses and the relevant tenant population in terms of characteristics associated with different average satisfaction scores."* (para 49)
- 6.2. Table 3 compares the survey response for each group of tenants with the tenant profile, using data from the current year 2023/24. Responses for each group closely match the profile of tenants and, most importantly, the key groups that have most effect on overall satisfaction match well (Age, Tenure and Area). This indicates that the system that we put in place with

the contractor, setting quotas based on the Age, Tenure and Area, is working well and building an overall survey response that is representative of the overall tenant population.

6.3. Table 3. Comparison of Q1 2023/24 response with tenant profile:

Characteristic	Group	Survey Responses	Tenant Profile
Panel Area	IE	13%	13%
	INE	5%	6%
	INW	6%	7%
	IS	12%	12%
	IW	15%	15%
	OE	8%	8%
	ONE	5%	4%
	ONW	7%	7%
	OS	9%	8%
	OSE	10%	10%
	OW	9%	9%
Age	0-24	2%	3%
	25-34	12%	13%
	35-44	20%	20%
	45-54	20%	20%
	55-64	20%	19%
	65-74	14%	13%
	75-84	8%	8%
	85+	4%	4%
Sex	F	58%	61%
	M	42%	39%
Disability	No	74%	72%
	Yes	26%	28%
Ethnicity	White: British	77%	77%
	Ethnic Minority	23%	23%
Asset Type	Bedsit	0%	0%
	Bungalow	6%	6%
	Flat	26%	26%
	High Rise	15%	13%
	House	51%	53%
	Maisonette	2%	2%
Tenure	General Needs	93%	92%
	Retirement Life	7%	8%

7. Recommendations

- 7.1. Members of the Leeds Housing Board are asked to consider the approach being used for the TSM Survey 2023/24, which was based on analysis of findings from the pilot survey 2022/23, provide comments and confirm agreement.