

Rother District Council

Report to:	Audit and Standards Committee
Date:	4 December 2023
Title:	Rother District Council Owned Accommodation Complaints and Tenant Satisfaction Report
Report of:	Joe Powell, Head of Housing & Regeneration
Purpose of Report:	To present the annual findings of the Rother District Council owned accommodation complaints and tenant satisfaction measures.

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED**: That the report be noted.

Introduction

1. This report provides the annual review of complaints and tenant satisfaction measures in Rother District Council (RDC) owned accommodation.
2. The Council became a Registered Provider (RP) for housing in 2020, and as part of our duties as an RP, we must follow the complaint handling code set by the Housing Ombudsman. This is the first year that we have had an established policy and procedure.
3. In October 2023, the Social Housing (Regulation) Act was introduced, which put greater emphasis on Tenant Satisfaction Measures. We introduced the tenant satisfaction surveys in June 2023, but have been completing exit surveys with all tenants since 2022.

Details

4. Over the past year, we have received no complaints regarding RDC owned accommodation. Where we have had service requests for maintenance to be completed, these are completed in a timely manner. Staff are readily available for tenants when issues arise. Tenants are aware of how to make a complaint as we provide a complaints leaflet at sign-up, as well as mentioning complaints and compliments in the newsletter also.
5. As part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, all tenants are given the opportunity to feedback into the service by completing the survey issued during the summer period. This survey includes questions set by the Regulator of Social Housing, covering five themes: keeping properties in good repair; maintaining building safety; respectful and helpful engagement; effective handling of complaints; and responsible neighbourhood management. The questionnaire can be found at Appendix A.
6. We received 16 completed surveys back from 25 surveys that were circulated, which is only a 64% response rate. Next year we would hope to have a much higher response rate, ideally 90-100%, as we have more staff involved in the

delivery of the support to our tenants. We will also seek to have the survey translated into other languages as some of our tenants have English as a second language.

7. Of the tenants that responded, 100% were satisfied their property was well-maintained, 100% felt they were treated fairly and with respect and 100% felt they were listened to and updated. Overall, no-one was dissatisfied with the service they were provided by the Council as their landlord.
8. Exit surveys are completed when someone moves on from our accommodation. Of the surveys completed, this year we have seen the following comments regarding the housing management staff: *'very supportive', 'always happy and cheerful' 'non-judgmental'*. One former tenant wrote: *'I feel very privileged to be given such a safe place to stay for me and my 3 children.'*

Conclusion

9. On review of the evidence provided, the outcome is good. We have received no complaints relating to RDC owned accommodation and tenant satisfaction is also good.

Financial Implications

10. If we were not complying with the complaint handling code, then we could face fines by the Housing Ombudsman and have to release compensation to our complainants.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	No	Exempt from publication	No

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Appendices:	A Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey
Relevant Previous Minutes:	None
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None