

Report on the New Tenant
Feedback Survey for the New
Queen's Gate Development in
Stanmore



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Survey Overview

Background and Introduction

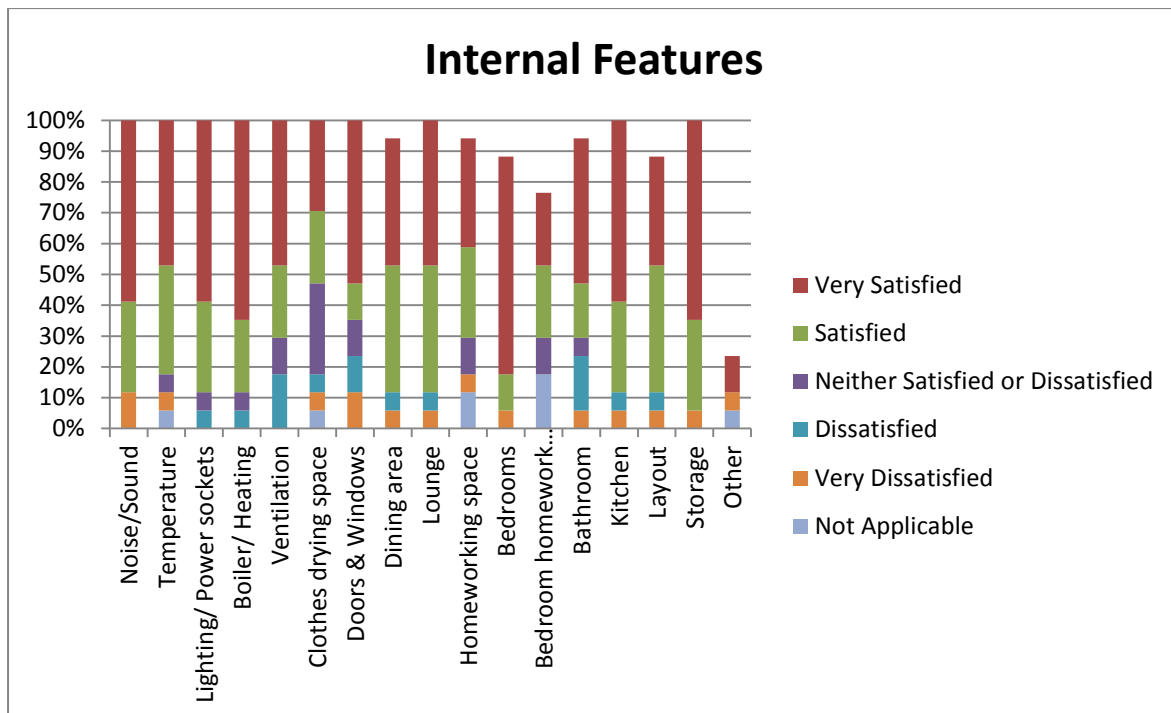
The New Queen’s Gate development consists of 21 units and is situated in Stanmore. The first of the properties was completed in December 2015 with the final one completed in February 2016. The units comprise of 1 x 1 bedroom bungalow, 6 x 1 bedroom flats, 9 x 2 bedroom houses and 5 x 3 bedroom houses. A follow up survey was conducted in the latter part of May and early part of June 2017 to establish how people felt about their new homes and to identify any issues or problems they may have had. This was slightly later than anticipated due to a number of maintenance issues having to be completed beforehand. After a number of follow up contacts, including emails, telephone calls and face-to-face visits a total of 17 households completed a questionnaire, giving a response rate of 81%. It subsequently became apparent that one of the four properties that didn’t respond was void, so only three occupied properties failed to respond.

A breakdown of the household responses shows that 12 of the responses came from people living in houses (5 x 3 bedroom & 7 x 2 bedroom) and 5 came from people living in the flats (5 x 1 bedroom).

Analysis of survey responses

Internal Features

Question One: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following internal features?



Internal features were generally well received, with only a small number of respondents reporting levels of dissatisfaction, none of which warrant further investigation at this time. We will continue to review feedback from residents of other new schemes to see if there is a more noticeable trend.

The respondent who put 'Very Dissatisfied' with 'Other' category did not write what this was about, but we did have other comments as follows:

- *'Faulty electric fuse in kitchen, wired up wrong, extractor boost. Extractor fan in kitchen seems a bit stupid across the other side of the room with a fire alarm in the middle.'* – Interestingly, despite this comment the respondent gave a 'Satisfied' score for the 'Kitchen' question. (3BH)
- *'Sound insulation from hallway into flats could be better- though I do have quite a large gap under my front door that I have noticed by neighbours don't have.'* – Interestingly the respondent making this comment had actually answered the 'Noise/Sound' question as 'Very Satisfied'. (1BF)
- *'Solar panels – we have no idea if they are working to give us electric; they're on and meter is functioning, just no information on if it's benefiting us.'* (2BH)
- *The Television and Virgin Plugs etc. in the living room are in the most stupid place.* (1BF)
- *Lighting - has weird set up. Lounge - electric & gas fuse box on sitting room wall not cupboard. Bathroom - not happy with flooring but happy with wet room overall. Layout - would have preferred larger lounge and smaller kitchen.* (2BH)
- *Kitchen striplight blew fairly soon after moving in; Bathroom ventilation poor also vent switch above door?; Radiators not placed under window; Can't open living room windows – dropped.* (3BH)

Question Two: Are there any changes you would make to the internal features that you consider would be an improvement for future developments?

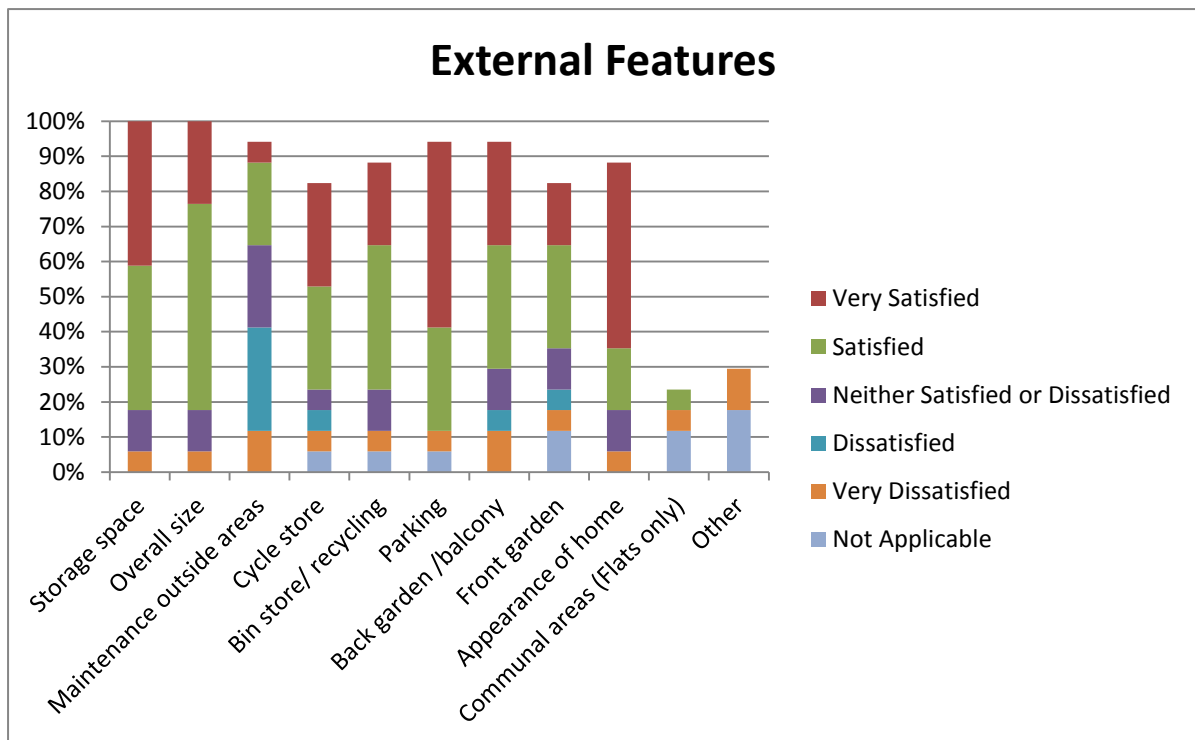
Eleven of the seventeen respondents made comments.. Importantly, there are no comments that are repeated by multiple respondents so it appears that there are no fundamental problems with the internal design and layout.

- *'The taps in the kitchen and bathroom should use mono-taps.'* (2BH)
- *'The kitchen and dining area is not very well planned we have a small table and 5 chairs which end up taking up a lot of floor when we are trying to deal with mealtimes.'* – This respondent gave a 'Dissatisfied' score for 'Dining Area' but a 'Satisfied' score for 'Kitchen' (3BH)
- *'They need to do bathroom and kitchen bedroom [sic] needs to be bigger'* (1BF)
- *'Bathroom with windows are helpful- though of course difficult to plan for.'* (1BF)
- *'There is no telephone and internet cable sockets. Kitchen tube light not working properly.'* (3BH)
- *'Making cupboards that open properly and will not collide with others. Same with garden door near lounge.'* (2BH)
- *'Patio area could be 2-3 feet bigger then it would be excellent and not cramped for one persons. Do not use door handles on the storage doors- they are useless it is a pull function needed. A heating system that is easy to understand.'* (1BF)

- 'No space for dishwasher.' (2BH)
- 'Larger or more efficient radiators.' (2BH)
- Making the lounge area big enough for a dining table & kitchen smaller would make more sense. Not putting fuse box on the wall in plain view in lounge and putting in cupboard. Box windows at front noisy when raining so be better flat (2BH)
- Don't put shower in front of the bathroom window (3BH)

External Features

Question Three: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following external features?



Residents were found to be less satisfied with the external features. The biggest areas of concern were the 'Maintenance of Outside Areas' and 'Back garden/balcony'. When designing future schemes we will bear in mind the importance that residents clearly give to the size and quality of the external areas.

One of the two respondents who put 'Very Dissatisfied' with 'Other' category did not indicate what this was for and the other stated:

- 'Flat's bin store next to my garden which attracts fly's, wasps etc. Guttering at side of house removed and not replaced'.

The following three comments were also received:

- 'School kids run through front garden. Back Garden is not brilliant, size is not bad but grassy area is waterlogged a lot. Stones with back doors that open at ground level and children who

like to play with so they get stuck under door, then doors wont open or shut and becomes dangerous.’ (3BH)

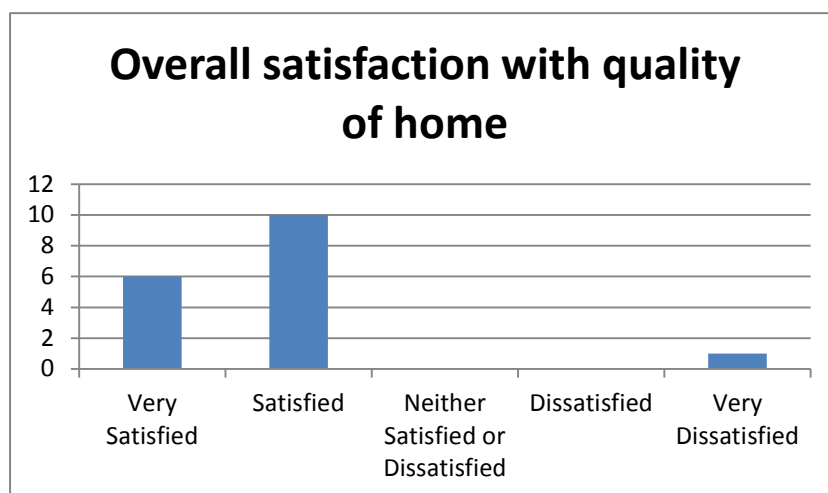
- ‘The window sills when it rains its very noisy unable to sleep.’ (2BH)
- ‘On a disabled ground floor flat do not have the gas meter dug into the ground.’ – (1BF)

Question Four: Are there any changes you would make to external features that you consider would be an improvement for future developments?

The following comments were made by respondents.

- ‘Don’t use stones when they are ‘family’ homes. Make the grass area better.’ (3BH)
- ‘I would have liked a larger garden.’ (2BH)
- ‘Gardeners could do some weeding/ Litter picking. It was necessary to put a lock on the bin store as neighbours began dumping rubbish in other neighbours bins (in wrong bins + kettles/mops etc.). Bin store could have lock on it, like bike store does.’ – The respondent making these comments gave a ‘Satisfied’ or ‘Very Satisfied’ score for all relevant external features except for ‘Maintenance of Outside Areas’ which they answered as ‘Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied’ (1BF)
- ‘All houses have bin areas as often forget to put bin out.’ (2BH)
- ‘As we pay for outside maintenance, does this include front garden or just the grass areas?’ (2BH)
- ‘Decking area/ Awning and artificial grass.’ (2BH)
- ‘Street lights did not work for 8 months. No block paving down- issue with parking.’ (2BH)
- ‘Do not place bin stores along side of gardens. Make sure maintenance men do what they are supposed to do’. (3BH)

Question Five: Overall how satisfied are you with the quality of your home?



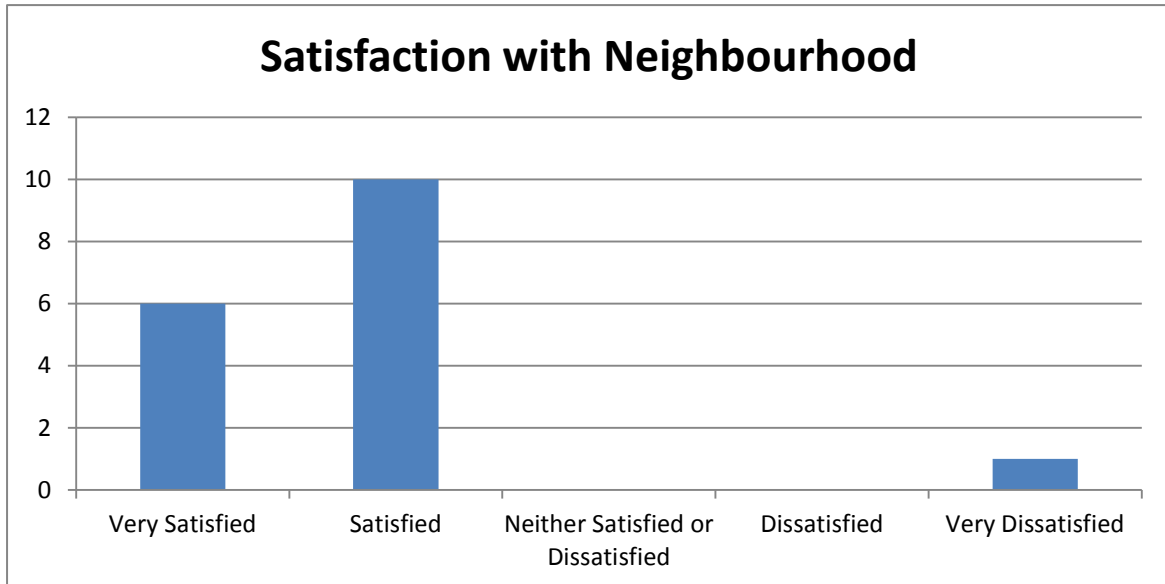
Overall 94% of the respondents were either ‘Satisfied’ or ‘Very Satisfied’ with the quality of their home.

The respondent giving the ‘Very Dissatisfied’ score lived in a 1 bedroomed flat. They were ‘Very Dissatisfied’ with thirteen of seventeen ‘Internal Features’ and all ‘External Features’.

The level of dissatisfaction expressed by this tenant suggests that there are wider issues that simply the design of the new property. Officers from Housing Management will contact this tenant to find out more.

Local Community facilities and activities

Question Six: Generally how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?

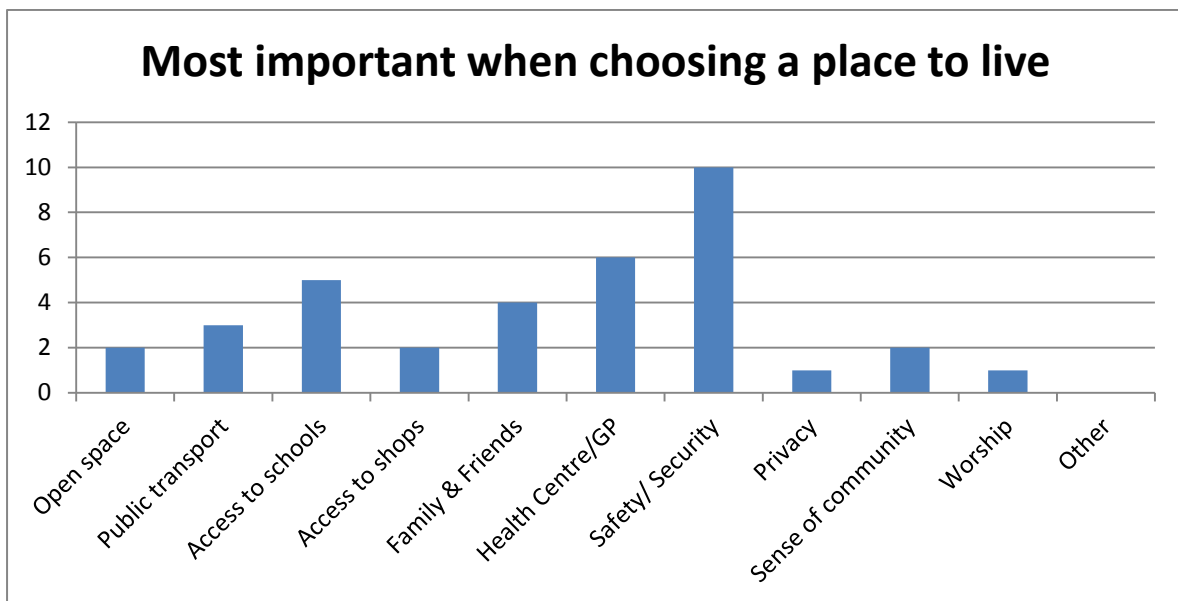


Sixteen out of the seventeen respondents were either 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with their neighbourhood as a place to live. The following comments were received from eleven respondents as an explanation for the answer they provided.

- *'Very convenient to shops, buses, recreational centre and short walk to meadows.'*
- *'We were already living in Stanmore and like the area.'*
- *'I am satisfied, but have not been out in the nearby area for reasons of mobility.'*
- *'Quiet, nice neighbours.'*
- *'I do not hear anything from them, very quiet.'*
- *'Few noisy neighbours, but to be expected, otherwise very nice people.'*
- *'School close by and nursery at Carroll shops. Bus stop also close by.'*
- *'Perfect- Local facilities close by.'*
- *'Good local school, parks and Carroll centre.'*
- *'Neighbours reasonably quiet. Some neighbours leave rubbish outside for long periods. Would be better if all the outside area are tidied up more frequently, I often pick up rubbish myself.'*
- *'Good neighbours, no noise problems except for church bells on a Sunday and people using the footpath'*

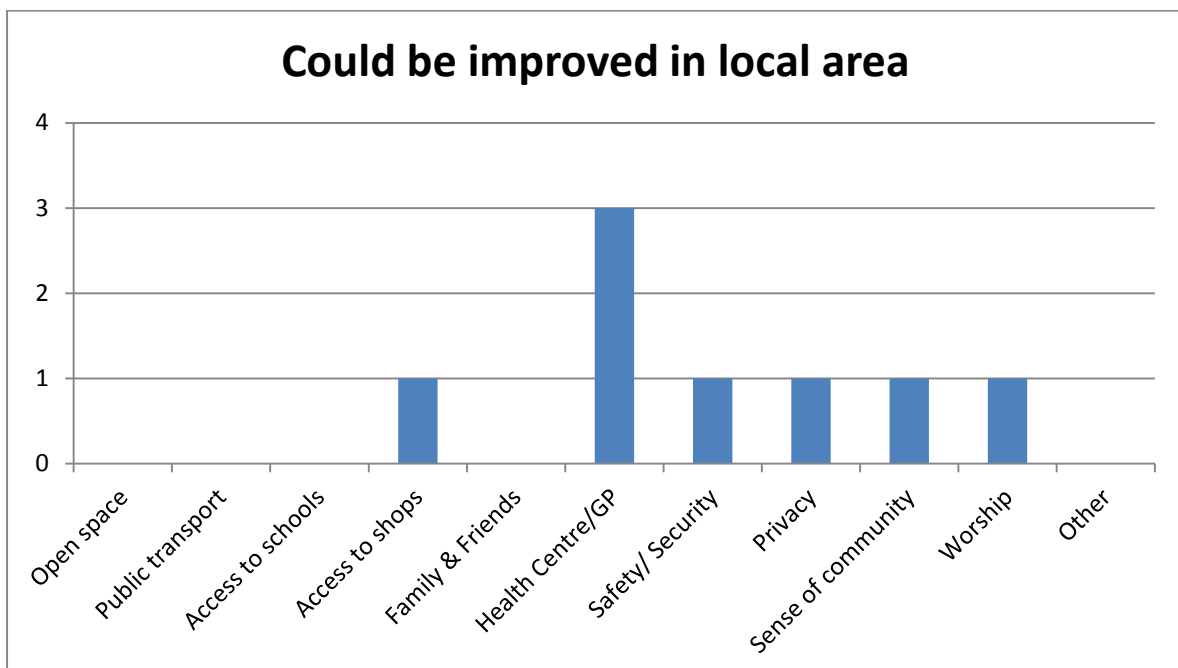
The respondent who gave the 'Dissatisfied' score was the same respondent who answered 'Very Dissatisfied' for the majority of the 'Internal' and 'External' features in questions one and three above.

Question Seven: Which of the following are most important for you in choosing a place to live?



This question had a modest response rate with five people leaving the question blank. However the important factor in design terms was 'Safety & Security', which was identified by ten respondents. Other factors such as 'Health Centre/GP' and 'Access to Schools' were also viewed to be important with six and five responses respectively. These responses serve to remind us of the importance of developing schemes in communities across the District.

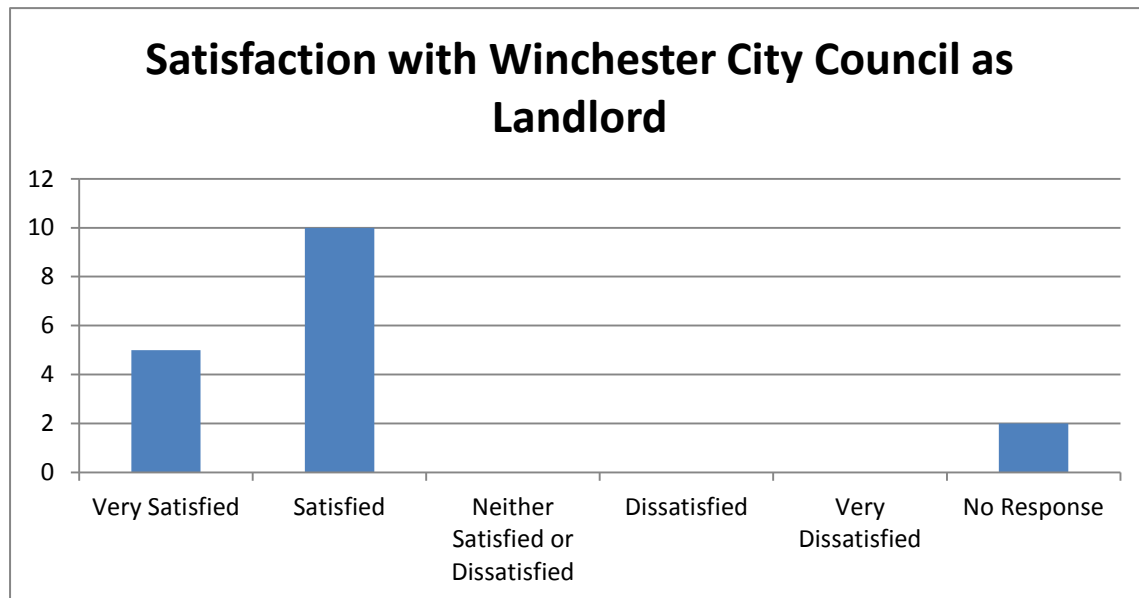
Question Eight: Which of the above do you feel could be improved in your local area?



Only six people opted to answer this question. Only 'Health Centre/GP' was chosen more than once.

Housing Management

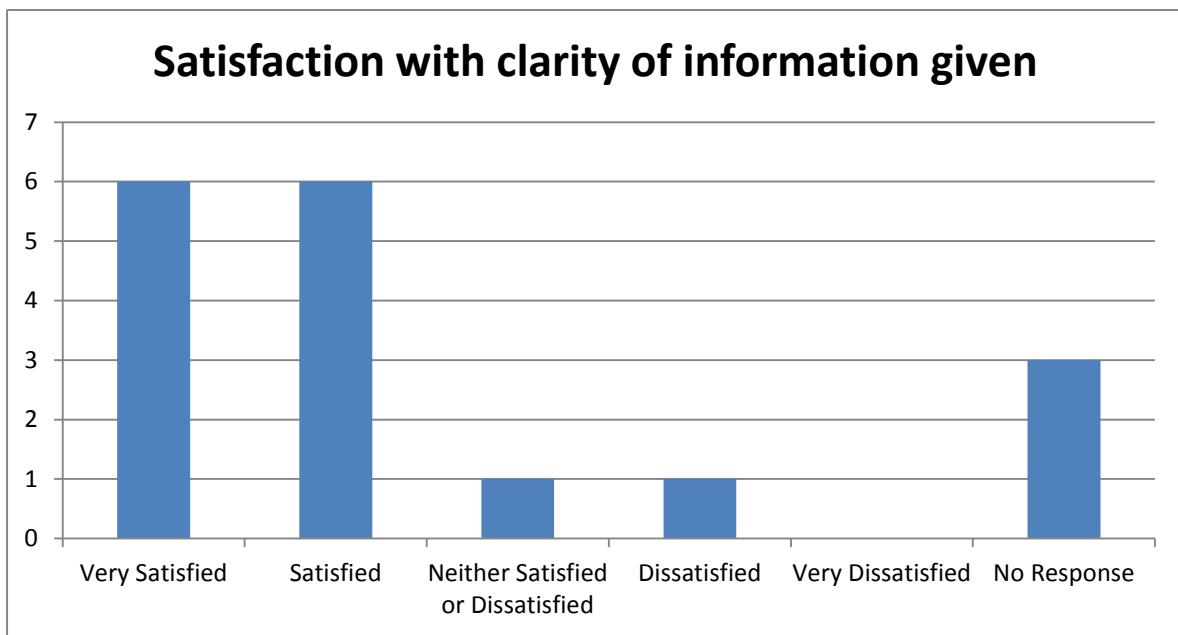
Question Nine: Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Winchester City Council as your landlord?



The vast majority of respondents highlighted their satisfaction with the Council as a landlord, reflecting the results of the recent STAR satisfaction survey carried out on a larger scale within Winchester City Council. The following comments were received from ten of the seventeen respondents as an explanation for the answer they provided.

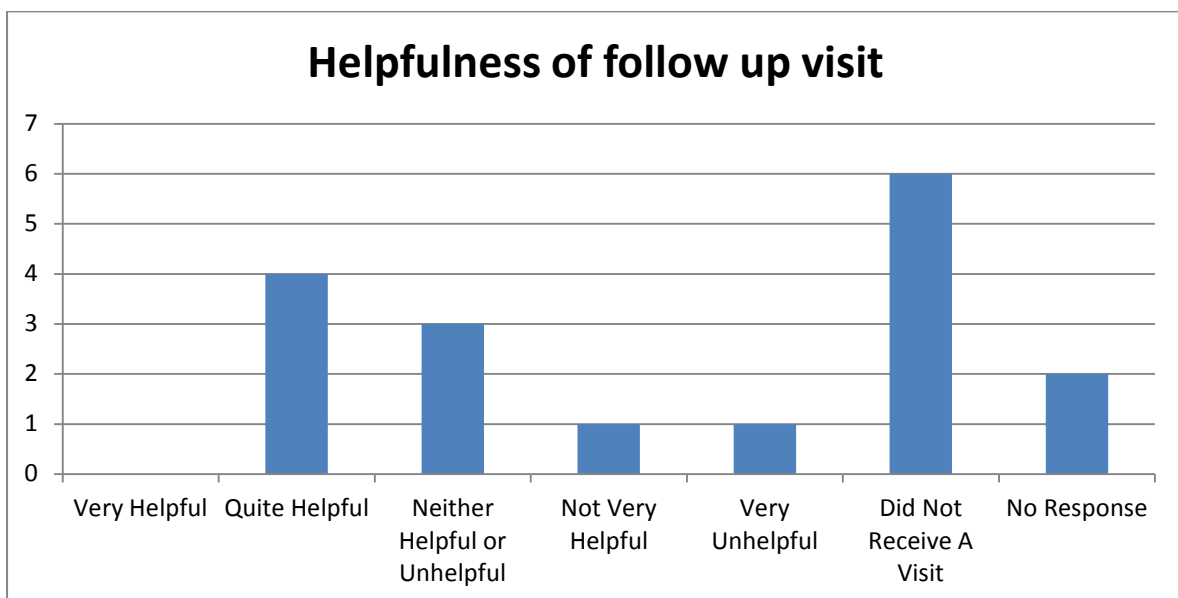
- *'I have no complaints.'*
- *'WCC have been very helpful at all stages of moving in and being a tenant.'*
- *'They seem on top of things.'*
- *'Very helpful and on time when come out to flat/house.'*
- *'We don't really have much need to communicate unless a problem arises.'*
- *'Problems dealt with when reported.'*
- *'Not had any real problems.'*
- *'Generally deal with enquiries okay.'*
- *Usually respond quickly to repair requests*
- *Respond well to calls & queries*

Question Ten: At sign up for your new property, how clear was the information given to you?



Once again, the majority of respondents were happy with the information provided by Winchester City Council.

Question Eleven: During the follow up visit to provide information on how to use equipment e.g. solar panels etc. how helpful was this visit?



This question was answered by fifteen of the seventeen respondents, six of whom did not receive a follow up visit and only four of whom thought the visit they received was 'Quite helpful'. There is clearly a question as to the effectiveness of these visits. The respondents scoring the follow up visit as 'Not very helpful' and 'Very Unhelpful' made the following remarks respectively:

- *'No explanation over solar panels.'*
- *'Contractors came out but did not instruct.'*

A further comment from a tenant stated:

- 'Solar panels not switched on or phone lines connected'

This is an example of the type of issue that will form part of the remit of the new posts of Housing Project Manager – New Homes and Neighbourhoods which have recently been recruited to deal with the transition of properties from the New Homes Programme into the main body of stock.

Question Twelve: Is there anything you would change to the sign up or follow up visit to make it more useful?

Only five comments were received for this question as follows:

- *'I was asked to sign a form stating that I would move from this property when my husband no longer needed housing as the doctors only gave him a year to live, I found it very insensitive, my husband has been admitted to hospital 3 times since moving here each time I have the additional worry that I might need to move home.'* – Interestingly, the respondent commented that they were 'Satisfied' in both previous questions on Winchester City Council as a landlord and for the clarity of information received at sign up
- *'Could have been a bit more information in the follow up process about solar energy- how much tenants use.'*
- *'Definitely needed more information about the solar panels'*
- *'A bit more information regarding solar panels.'*
- *'More instruction and guidance for when things go wrong.'*

Question Thirteen: Are there any other comments you would like to make about your home, your neighbourhood or the services provided by Winchester City Council as your housing provider?

The following six comments were received for this question:

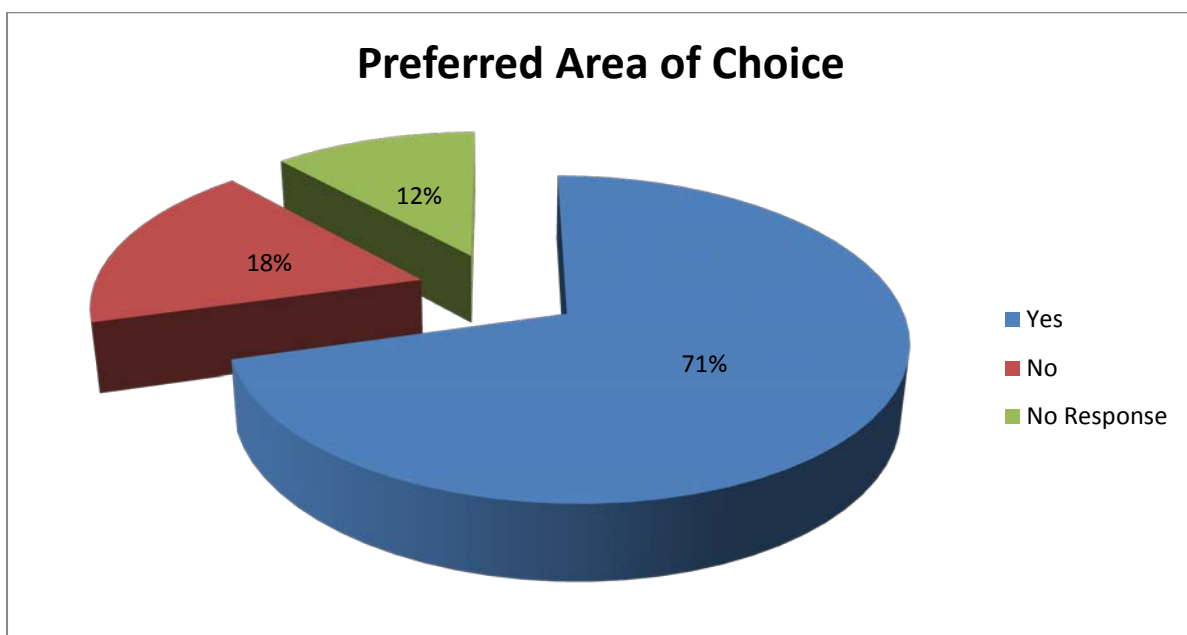
- *'I'm aware that your priority was to house us as quickly as possible, when rehousing someone in our situation more thought should be given as to what kind of neighbours would be suitable.'* – Interestingly the respondent making this comment noted that they were 'Satisfied' with Winchester City Council as their landlord.
- *'Nothing springs to mind.'*
- *'Very impressed by WCC. They have always helped with any issues I've had with the property or issues with members of public leaving cars in residential parking. Very Helpful.'*
- *'Generally very happy.'*
- *'Noisy Neighbours.'*
- *'More thought into the layout i.e. position of radiators. Also we pay service charge for maintenance but no one checks it gets done.'*

You & Your Household

Question Fourteen: Which area did you move from?

Of the fifteen responses received for this question, eight had moved from within the Stanmore estate, three had relocated from Harestock and one each from St Cross, Winnall and Kingsworthy and one from outside the district in Wiltshire. Two respondents did not answer the question. This is in line with the Local Lettings Plan (LLP) applied to this development which sought for 50% of properties to be allocated to people with a local connection.

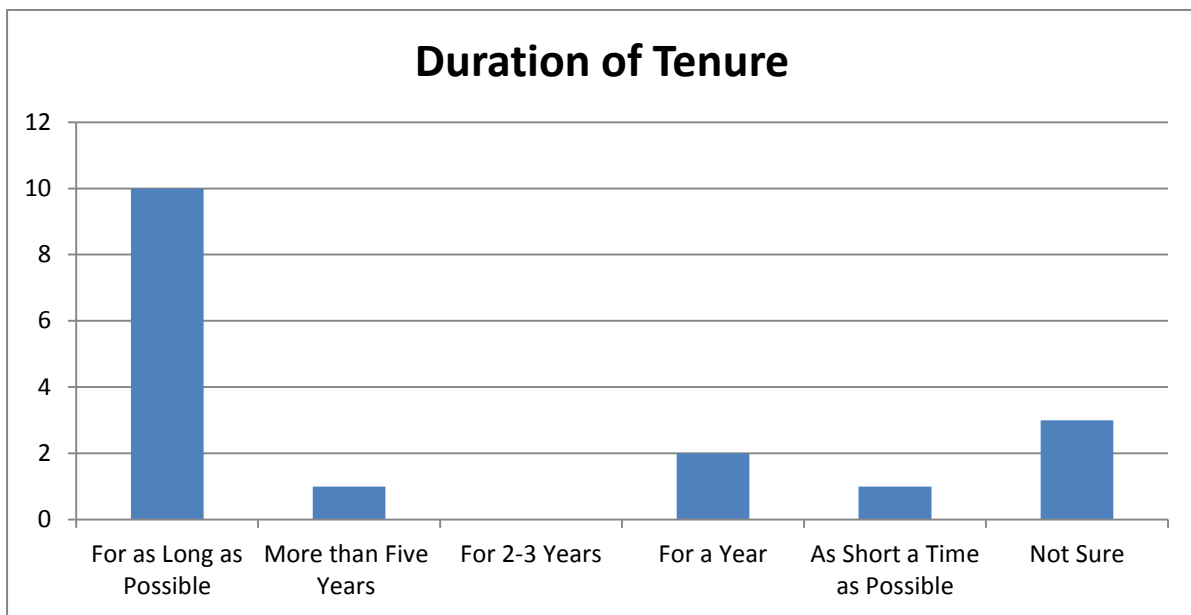
Question Fifteen: Was this area in your preferred area of choice?



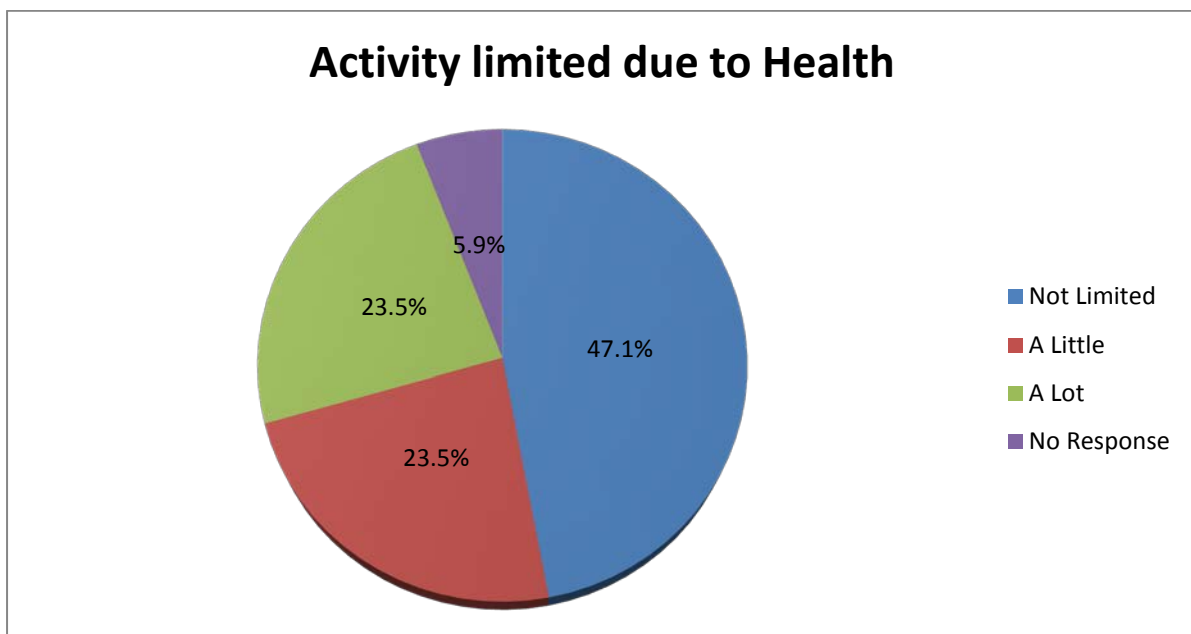
71% of respondents said that the development was in their preferred area of choice. The respondents who said it was not their preferred area of choice stated:

- *they took the property due to it being 'three bedroom and a new house'.*
- *Weeke was first choice as daughter lives there, but we took this property in case we didn't get Weeke new build*
- *Was concerned over the reputation of the area but the housing officer convinced us it was a good area*

Question Sixteen: How long do you think you will be in your present home?



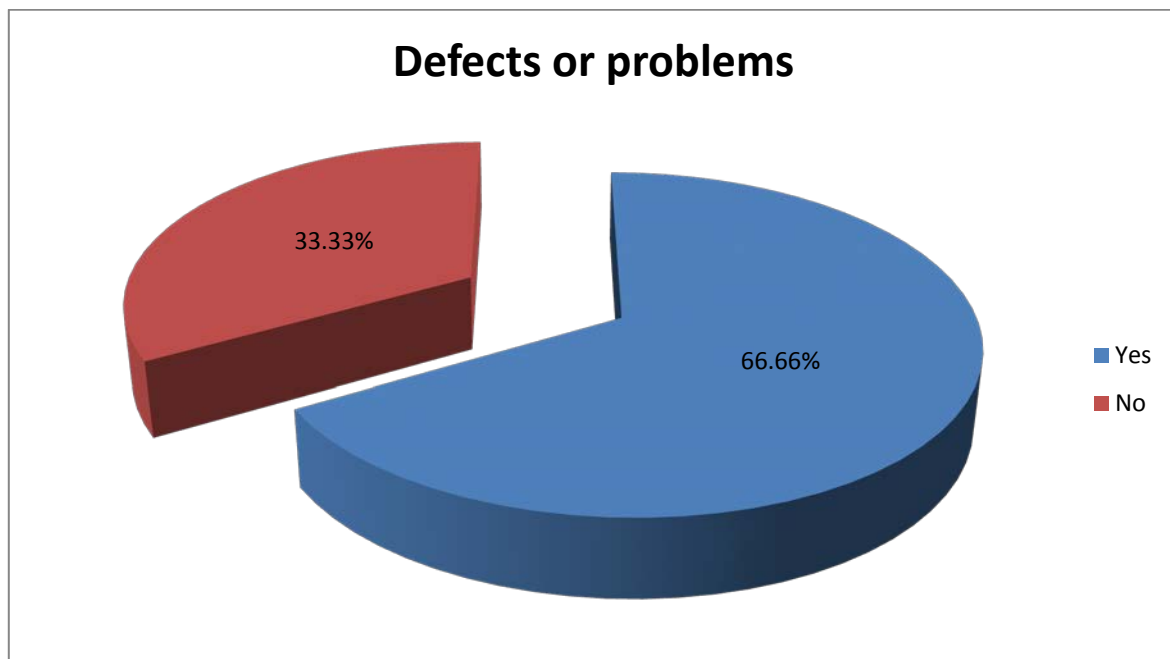
Overall it is positive to see that two thirds of respondents wish to remain in their homes for five or more years. However, it is disappointing that three out of the seventeen respondents say they think they will be there for a year or less. One explanation might be to do with the suitability of the property for people with long-term or health needs or limitations as two out of the three who indicated they would be likely to be in the property for a short period have also indicated that their 'Day to Day activities' are 'limited a lot' because of health problems (see below).



Maintenance Issues

Question Seventeen: After moving into your home were there any defects or problems you became aware of with the property that you reported to the developer or Winchester City Council?

According to the defect report, all twenty-one properties were identified with having outstanding maintenance or snagging issues upon tenants moving into the property. However, only twelve of the seventeen respondents (67%) indicated that they had maintenance issues upon moving into the property.

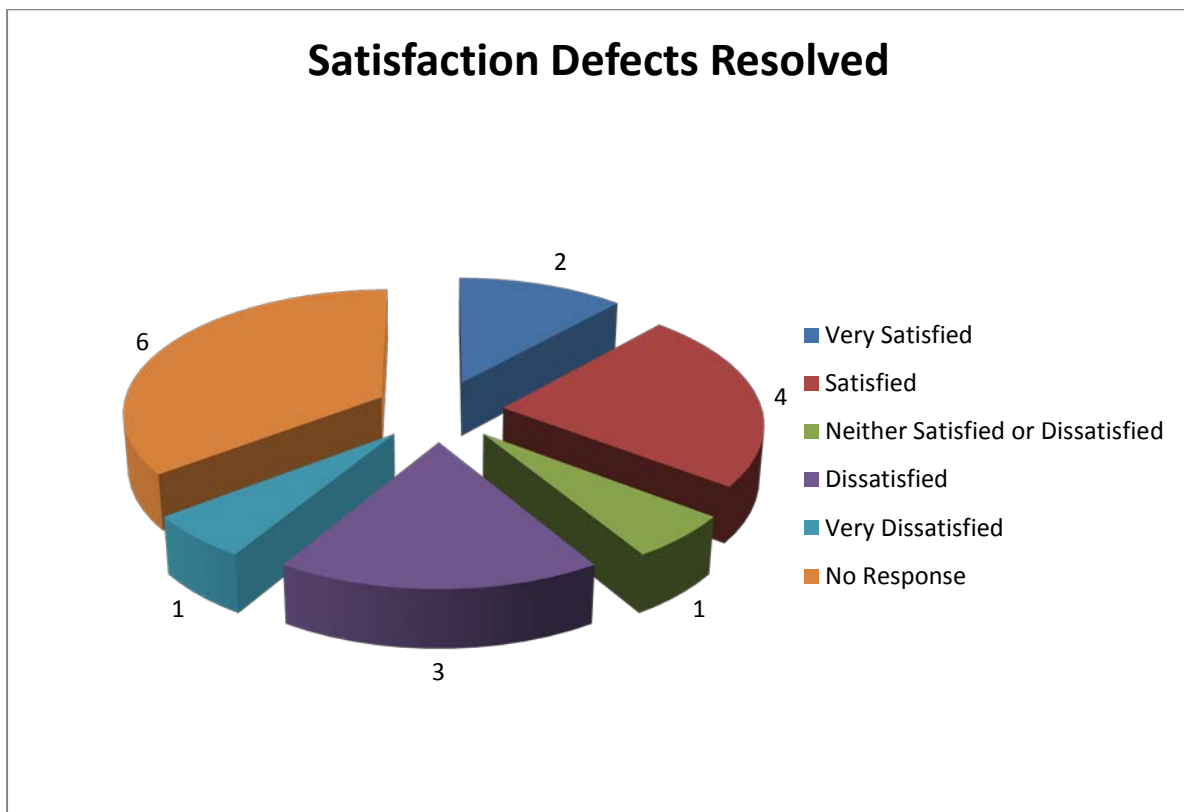


Once again there were no recurring issues requiring further investigation at this time. A description of the issues is given as follows:

- *'The outside (backyard) the level of soil seems to have shrunk causing the grass to disappear.'* (2BH)
- *'Front door handle broke off. Handle came off upstairs cupboard door.'* (3BH)
- *'Ventilation 6 times sitting room light switch leak in down stairs toilet twice. Bell room floor taken up four times before deciding unable to fit lift it took 6 months until stair lift was put in the electric was on the wrong side of the stairs.'* (2BH)
- *'Water leaking into bedroom around window. Damage to bathroom door (minor). One of balcony doors would not open. Not able to run a hot bath. Lino in kitchen not stuck down in small area. Outside storage area outhouse had long nails coming through ceiling.'* (1BF)
- *'Window is not working properly in single room.'* (3BH)
- *'A4 list of faults, back door not locking, faulty fans in kitchen and toilet, popped screw in bedroom, shower light not working.'* (2BH)
- *'Toilet was not properly secured to the floor. Toilet basin was not secured to the wall, lots of other minor things.'* (1BF)
- *'Upstairs window in small bedroom not closing properly.'* (2BH)

- 'Back door replaced, window sill in bathroom, ceiling and porch. Bedroom window wouldn't lock.' (2BH)
- 'Downstairs toilet light' (3BH)
- 'Bedroom window keeps dropping & wont close properly. Was repaired but happened again. Back door not sealed properly. Been repaired satisfactorily. Leak from shower onto lounge ceiling repaired. Boiler problems, kept breaking down. Had a leak behind the wall in kitchen and once pipe repaired boiler ok'. (2BH)
- 'Crack above Kitchen Window. Can't open windows in living room'. (3BH)

Question Eighteen: Overall how satisfied are you that the problem was resolved?



The respondent who was 'Very Dissatisfied' commented '*Nothing done. Still trying to grow grass. The soil is shrunk.*' This issue was not listed on the defect report, so officers from the New Homes Team will make contact to find out more.

Conclusion

Overall, respondents' satisfaction with the quality of their home was high. The external areas caused the greatest concern so this will be factored into the design process for future schemes.

The majority of respondents were happy with Winchester City Council as a landlord. They were less happy with the follow up visit they received and there was one tenant who was unhappy with many aspects of their home, so the Council will contact this resident in order to get a better understanding of their dissatisfaction.

The results will be aggregated with similar feedback from other new schemes to help identify any recurring themes to further inform our future developments.

Actions undertaken

1. The design process for future schemes will give greater weight to the extent, quality and maintenance of outside areas. Specific elements are being added to the Employer's Requirements (ERs) and/or design process as appropriate.
2. The design process for future schemes will involve other Housing teams at the earliest possible stage to ensure a fully joined-up approach from the outset. Design meetings have been established to formalise the agreement and sign-off of schemes by relevant teams and will form part of the highlight reporting.
3. Officers from Housing Management contacted the dissatisfied tenant and discovered there were wider issues to be resolved. The tenant never actually wanted to live in Winchester and has since relocated to another area.
4. The new Housing Project Managers – New Homes and Neighbourhoods are reviewing the effectiveness of the whole regime of follow-up visits.
5. Officers from the New Homes Team contacted the tenant about the issue with soil which wasn't adequately addressed. The tenant has resolved the issue through their own actions since the survey and is now happy with their garden.