

Questionnaire Report - Proposed Changes to Tenancy Agreement

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1. Summary

Questionnaire format: Paper and online questionnaire
Responses: Total 1079 (Paper: 1075) (Web: 4)
Date range: 16th October 2017 to 3rd December 2017

2. Introduction

The Council is proposing to change the Tenancy Agreement which it uses for all its secure and introductory tenants and to make some changes to the services it provides including:

- repairs and maintenance
- rent collection
- collection of water rates.

The law says that the Council must tell all tenants about the changes it plans to make by giving every tenant a preliminary notice informing them of the Council's intention to serve a Notice of Variation to the Tenancy Agreement. Every Council tenant was posted an information pack which included:

- An explanatory letter
- The proposed new Tenancy Agreement
- The current version of the Tenancy Agreement
- A summary of the changes to the Tenancy Agreement
- Proposed changes to the repair and maintenance obligations and response times

- A questionnaire form (and freepost envelope) for tenants to let us know their views and comments on our proposals

In addition, the consultation was promoted on the front page of the Council's website, Facebook and Twitter accounts, and has featured in the Derbyshire Times website and Facebook page. The full information pack was available online, including a link to complete the questionnaire online.

In addition, Housing services organised a number of roadshows across the Borough throughout October and November where tenants could speak to Housing representatives about the proposed changes.

3. Questionnaire results

Section 1: Tenancy Agreement

Q1. A summary of the proposed changes to the tenancy agreement is attached. Do you have any comments on these proposed changes?



A range of comments were made in response to this question. They have been grouped into the following themes (in order of frequency). Key themes were concerns about changes to repairs and concerns about payments, in addition to concerns about the proposals in general, although around 50 respondents also made comments in support of the proposed changes. All of the comments can be read in full at Appendix 1.

- comments raising concern about changes to repairs arrangements (69 comments)
- comments were received in general support of the proposals (50 comments)
- comments raising concerns about payments and/or arrears (47 comments)
- comments were received in general opposition to the proposals (41 comments)
- concerns about changes to rent payments (37 comments)
- comments understanding the reason for proposed changes / in general acceptance (16 comments)
- comments not understanding the proposals (9 comments)
- comments about responsibility for repairs and standards on moving into a property (5 comments)
- 60 other comments

Section 2: Rent Payments



Q2. Do you understand why we are proposing to switch from a 48 week to a 52 week rent year?

The majority of respondents (82%) stated that they understand the reasons for proposing to change from a 48 week to a 52 week rent year.

Do you understand why we are proposing to switch from a 48 week to a 52 week rent year?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Yes	886	82.3%	 82.3%
No	190	17.7%	 17.7%

Q3. Do you agree with the proposal to switch from a 48 week to a 52 week rent year?

The majority of respondents (62%) stated that they agree with the proposal to change from a 48 week to a 52 week rent year, with 38% of respondents disagreeing.

Do you agree with the proposal to switch from a 48 week to a 52 week rent year?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Yes	655	62.3%	 62.3%
No	397	37.7%	 37.7%

Q4. Do you have any comments about the proposal to switch to a 52 week rent year?



A range of comments were made in response to this question. They have been grouped into the following themes (in order of frequency). Key themes were concerns about the proposals in general, although around 44 respondents also made comments in support of or with no strong opinion about the proposed changes. All of the comments can be read in full at Appendix 1.

- comments generally opposing the changes to rent year proposal (80)
- comments showing no strong opinion or in agreement with proposal (44)
- queries or incomplete understanding of proposals (31)
- concerns about payments, debt and arrears(25)
- concerns that the proposals impact on some people more than others (13)
- 6 other comments

Section 2: Repairs and Maintenance



Q5. Do you understand why we are proposing making these changes to tenant repair responsibilities?

The majority of respondents (79.5%) stated that they understood why CBC is proposing to make changes to tenant repair responsibilities.






Do you understand why we are proposing making these changes to tenant repair responsibilities?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Yes	833	79.5%	 79.5%
No	215	20.5%	 20.5%

Q6. Would making these repairs your responsibility give you any concerns or difficulties?

Around 36% of respondents indicated that the changes would not cause them any concerns or difficulties, however, around 64% had concerns. Those that indicated they would have concerns or difficulties, were asked to indicate the reasons for this. The most common reason stated was cost (63%) followed by disability or health related concerns, and inability or lack of skills (53%). 16.1% of respondents indicated that time would be a concern for them.

Would making these repairs your responsibility give you any concerns or difficulties?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Yes	693	64.3%	 64.3%
No	385	35.7%	 35.7%

If you answered yes, please tick the reasons that would cause you concern and / or difficulties in the boxes below. (Tick all that apply)

If you answered yes, please tick the reasons that would cause you concern and / or difficulties in the boxes below. (Tick all that apply)			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Health	416	49.3%	
Disability	525	62.3%	
Cost	530	62.9%	
Time	136	16.1%	
Inability / lack of knowledge	445	52.8%	




If other, please specify:

A range of ‘other reasons’ were given in response to this question. They have been grouped into the following themes (in order of frequency). Key themes were concerns about age, health or disability, followed by lack of skills or knowledge to undertake the repairs. All of the comments can be read in full at Appendix 1.

- comments in relation to age, health and disability (69)
- concerns about skills, ability or knowledge (50)
- concerns about affordability (24)
- concerns about finding reliable tradespeople (5)
- comments about lack of time (2)
- 23 other comments



Q7. If the Council introduced a repairs service where you could pay to have repairs carried out which are the tenant’s responsibility. Would you use this service?

A high of 41% of respondents indicated ‘don’t know’ in response to this question. 28.7% of respondents indicated that they would use the service, while 30% indicated that they would not use the Council’s repair service.

If the Council introduced a repairs service where you could pay to have repairs carried out which are the tenant’s responsibility, would you use this service?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Yes	307	28.7%	 28.7%
No	325	30.4%	 30.4%
Don’t know	438	40.9%	 40.9%

Q8. We are proposing that routine repairs will be carried out within 30 days. We will always give you an appointment for this repair. Does this make the potential increase in the time before the repair is carried out more acceptable to you?

The majority of respondents (65%) indicated that they felt that having a designated appointment would make a 30 day waiting time for routine repairs more acceptable.

We are proposing that routine repairs will be carried out within 30 days. We will always give you an appointment for this repair. Does this make the potential increase in the time before the repair is carried out more acceptable to you?			
	Number	Percent	Chart
Yes	666	65.4%	 65.4%
No	352	34.6%	 34.6%

Q9. Do you have any other comments in relation to proposed changes to the repairs and maintenance service?

A range of comments were made in response to this question. They have been grouped into the following themes (in order of frequency). Key themes were concerns about timeliness / urgent repairs and outstanding repairs and the cost of repairs. All of the comments can be read in full at Appendix 1.

- concerns about timeliness / urgent repairs and outstanding repairs (84)
- concerns or queries about the cost of repairs (49)
- comments about responsibility for repairs (33)
- preference to keep current arrangements (15)
- comments showing no strong opinion or in agreement with proposal (29)
- comments about customer service and respect (4)
- specific queries or alternative suggestions (21)
- comments about the nature of the repairs (16)
- concerns about quality of repairs and deterioration of properties (13)
- 24 other comments

Q10. Do you have any other general comments you wish to make about the Housing Service?

A range of comments were made in response to this question. They have been grouped into the following themes (in order of frequency). Key themes were concerns about age, health or disability, followed by lack of skills or knowledge to undertake the repairs. All of the comments can be read in full at Appendix 1.

- Generally positive comments about the service received (75)
- Comments generally opposing the proposed changes to tenancy agreement (46)
- Suggestions to improve service / efficiency (26)
- Concerns about waiting time for repairs to be done (11)
- Concerns over safety or struggling to undertake repairs under proposed changes (11)
- Concerns about anti-social behaviour (11)
- Queries / requests for further information (13)
- Concerns about penalising certain people through proposed changes to tenancy agreement (6)
- Concerns about changes to water rates collection (4)
- Confusion about proposed changes to tenancy agreement (3)
- Concerns about service received (17)
- Comments about gardens (2)
- 14 other comments

4. Equality monitoring

What is your gender?	
	Percentage
Male	37.0%
Female	57.7%
Transgender	1.8%
Prefer not to say	3.5%

How old are you?	
	Percentage
Under 18 years	0%
18 to 24 years	0.5%
25 to 34 years	2.3%
35 to 44 years	14.8%
45 to 54 years	13.2%
55 to 64 years	21.3%
65 to 74 years	24.0%
75 years and over	22.3%
Prefer not to say	1.6%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	
	Percentage
No	40.2%
Yes	53.7%
Prefer not to say	6.1%

What is your ethnicity?	
	Percentage
White British	89.2%

Other white background	2.0%
Black or Black British	3.0%
Asian or Asian British	2.2%
Mixed ethnic group	0.2%
Other ethnic group	1.8%
Prefer not to say	1.7%

Which of the following best describes your religion?	
	Percentage
Buddhist	0.4%
Christian	62.2%
Hindu	0.3%
Jewish	0.4%
Muslim	0.6%
Sikh	0.1%
None	26.4%
Other	3.8%
Prefer not to say	5.8%

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?	
	Percentage
Heterosexual	81.0%
Bisexual	1.7%
Lesbian	1.0%
Gay man	0.7%
Prefer not to say	15.6%