



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Annual Report

to tenants & leaseholders



2023 to 2024

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Introduction



John Batchelor
*Lead Cabinet Member
for Housing*



Peter Campbell
Head of Housing

Welcome to your annual report for 2023 to 2024.

It's been a busy year as we prepared for the new requirements following the implementation of the Social Housing Regulation Act and the establishment of the new Social Housing Regulator. We have embraced the new regulations to help drive improvements within the service and will continue to strengthen the work we do in maintaining your homes and how we communicate and involve tenants. Part of the requirements include knowing who our tenants are and the homes they live in.

We have recently carried out a stock condition survey on all our homes which will inform our programme of works in the coming years and in 2025 we will be updating our tenant information. This will enable us to better target our services and to support the work we are doing for tenants to self-serve so that they can easily access information.

As part of the new regulations, we are required to carry out an annual tenant satisfaction survey, the results of which are set out in this report. These measures are reported to the Housing Regulator to ensure tenants are receiving the service they deserve. Thank you to all those who took part in our annual tenant satisfaction survey to let us know what you think. These surveys will be carried out every year and we encourage as many tenants as possible to take part and give us your feedback so we can continue improving. Look out for the next survey coming out in January 2025.

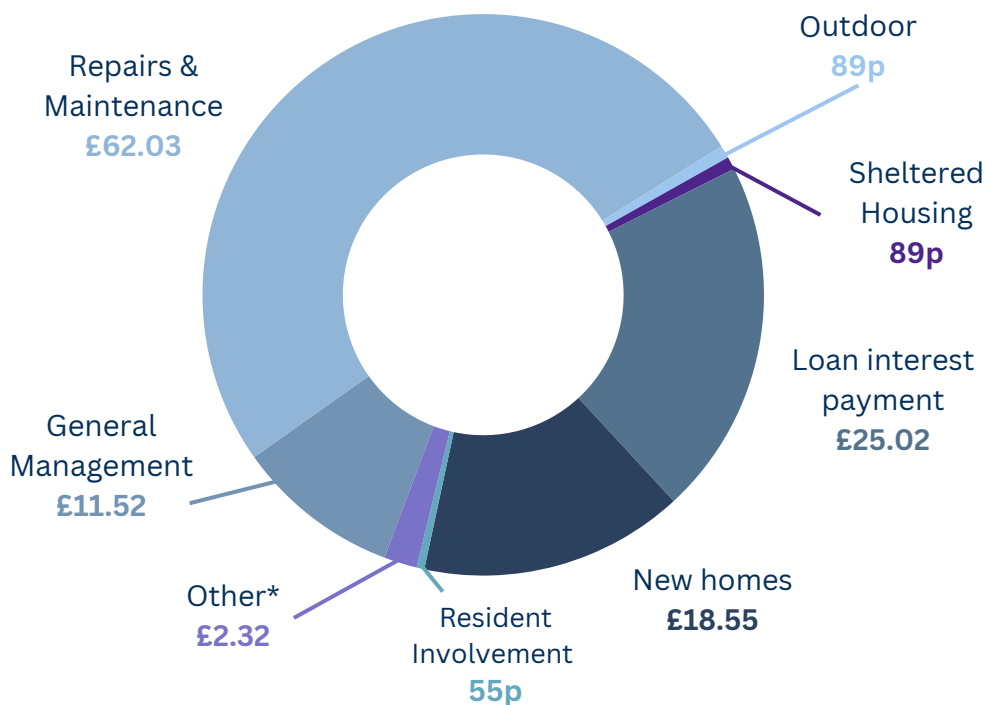
As a result of the tenant survey, you told us that satisfaction with how we communicate with you could be better, which has led to us working with our involved tenants and leaseholders to create a Communications Charter. This sets out the expectations of how we should be communicating with you and how you can contact us. More details can be found on [page 20](#) of this report.

How your rent is spent

Expenditure for 2023/24

General Management	£3,327,964	Repairs & Maintenance	£17,928,048
Outdoor	£257,882	Sheltered Housing	£258,642
Resident Involvement	£159,831	New homes	£5,361,503
Loan interest payment	£7,229,933	*Other	£671,878

How a weekly social rent of £121.78 is spent:



*What is Other?

Other covers many different things, the biggest being costs from other council services such as democratic services, treasury management, and communications. It also covers things like insurance, land registry, and business rates, among other things.

Overall Satisfaction

What our survey said:



Overall
satisfaction



Do you feel that the housing service provided by South Cambridgeshire District Council has become better or worse in the last 12 months?



Better



About
the same

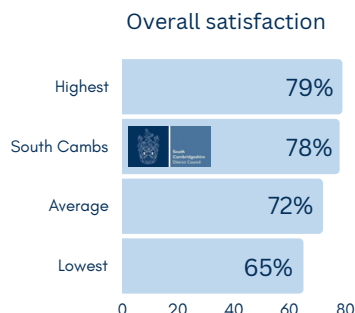


Worse



How we compare to other organisations

When compared to other organisations South Cambridgeshire appears to score just below the highest scoring of other organisations at 78% with the highest being 79%



What this means

Overall you are satisfied with our service but there are areas we can improve on. We are performing well when compared to our peers and a high percentage of you (74%) say the service has stayed the same when compared to last year.

Repairs

What our survey said:



Satisfaction
with repairs

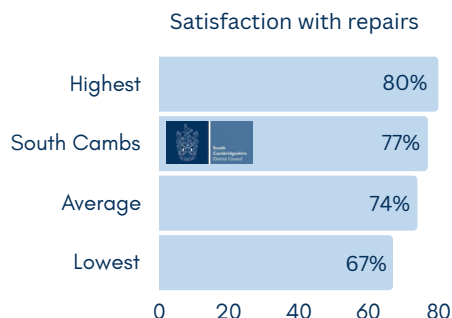


Satisfaction with
time taken to
complete most
recent repair



How we compare to other organisations

When compared to other organisations South Cambridgeshire appears to score just below the highest scoring organisations at 77% with the highest being 80%



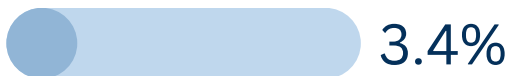
What this means

Compared to the 2022 survey results satisfaction with repairs has improved 8 percentage points so we are already seeing some improvement in this area. We will continue to monitor the service and make improvements.

How we have performed



Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard



Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale



non-emergency total repairs = 10408 with 740 not in timescale



Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale



emergency within 4hrs = 1423 emergency within 24hrs = 5049
a total of 6472 repairs, all within target = 100%



195
Boiler
replacements



175
Window
replacements



53
Installation
of insulation

www.scams.gov.uk/report-your-repair

0800 045 1313

Maintenance

What our survey said:



Satisfaction
that the
home is safe

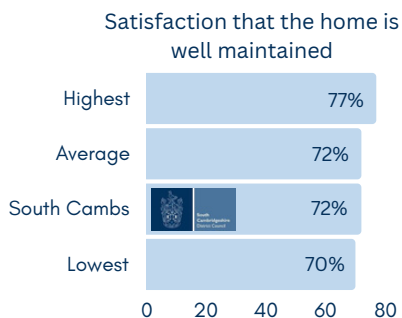


Satisfaction
that the
home is well
maintained



How we compare to other organisations

When compared to other organisations South Cambridgeshire appears to score average when compared with other organisations.



What this means

You are satisfied with your home being safe and nearly three quarters of you are satisfied with how your home is being maintained. Our stock condition survey of your homes will help us plan works to maintain them when and where it is needed.

How we are keeping your homes safe and maintained



100%

Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out



100%

Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out



100%

Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out



100%

Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments checks have been carried out



100%

Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out



We have employed a damp and mould surveyor to concentrate on dealing with reported cases of damp and mould.



We have produced an educational leaflet and video to inform tenants of the best way to deal with damp and mould and how to report a persistent issue.

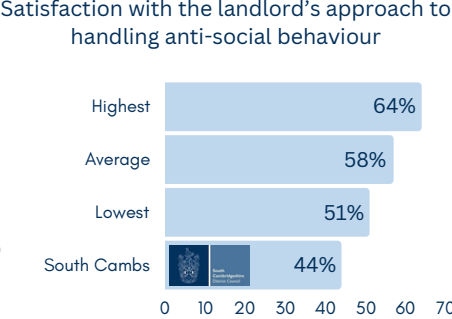
Neighbourhood Management

What our survey said:



How we compare to other organisations

When compared to other organisations South Cambridgeshire scores in the lowest group of other organisations at 44% with the lowest quartile average being 51%



What this means

We are performing low in this area compared to our peers so we need to make improvements to how we deal with anti-social behaviour cases. We will be looking at improvements to how we manage cases and communicate with you about anti-social behaviour when we review our policy with tenant representatives.

What we are doing



We are using a new case management system to manage cases reported to us.



We are part of the Community Safety Partnership which means we work with the Cambridgeshire County Council, Police, Fire and Rescue Service and the NHS and Probation Service, to deal with local crime and anti-social behaviour issues.



We have a mental health support worker to help support tenants with complex needs.



We are producing an anti-social behaviour policy with the involvement of tenants.



38.1

Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened during the year per 1,000 homes



0.7

Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened during the year per 1,000 homes

Getting rid of damp, mould

What is damp mould & condensation?

Damp is the presence of unwanted moisture in your home. It can come from water rising up through walls, leaking through roofs or walls, or moisture in the air that is not removed.

Mould is a type of fungus that looks like black, green, or white spots. It grows in damp places and can be harmful to your health if not removed.

Condensation is water droplets that form when warm, moist air hits a cold surface, like windows or walls. It often happens in bathrooms and kitchens where there is a lot of steam.

Ways to tackle the problem:



Ventilation is key. Opening windows for 10 to 15 minutes a day will allow fresh air to circulate



Making sure any ventilation bricks or vents are not covered or blocked



Wiping down areas prone to condensation, like window sills, and cleaning areas with a mould killing cleaning product regularly.



18°-20°

Keeping your home heated - a steady 18 to 21 degrees is ideal. This will help prevent condensation



Keeping continuous running extractor fans on at all times, especially in the kitchen and bathroom.

They will boost when needed and will help remove moisture.

If you don't think it is working efficiently, contact us.

and condensation



Drying clothes outside whenever possible.
If drying indoors make sure the internal door is closed and the room is well ventilated by opening windows or using an extractor fan.
The bathroom is the recommended place to do this



Avoiding overfilling wardrobes and cupboards



Not painting over untreated mould spots without cleaning and treating it first



Checking for any leaks and reporting them as soon as possible to 0800 085 1313

If the problem is persistent

If you are following the steps we have suggested and your problem is persistent, even after regular cleaning, then get in touch with us so we can look into the issue further.

We can then look for signs of structural issues, whether your home has enough ventilation, or other causes of the problem.

[Find out more on our website](#)

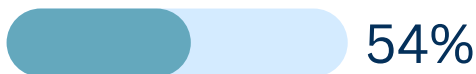


Resident Involvement

What our survey said:



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

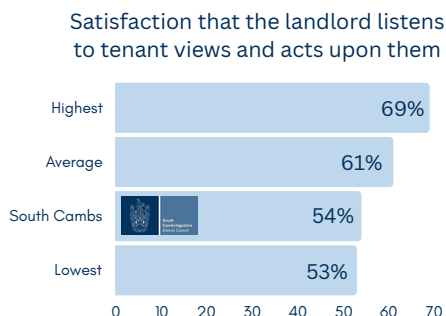


Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them



How we compare to other organisations

When compared to other organisations South Cambridgeshire are amongst the lowest performing organisation at 54%



What this means

We need to make improvements when it comes to listening to tenants and keeping them informed about what we are doing.



What we are doing to hear tenants views and keep you informed



We have a Housing Engagement Board that meets quarterly to review our performance and suggest improvements.



We have three panels that look at our performance, review our policies, and check our contracts are fit for purpose.



Housing and estate officers, together with tenant volunteers, also carry out formal estate inspections. They look at a range of issues, including: landscaping, pathways, communal areas in buildings, fly-tipping and signs of infestations. These are carried out from April to October.



We publish regular newsletters to tenants to update you on the latest news and service changes.



Your chance to join



We will be holding elections in March 2025 for tenant representatives to sit on our Housing Engagement Board. Look out for how to nominate yourself in the new year in our newsletters and website or if you would like to find out more, get in touch.

resident.involvement@scambsgov.uk



Tenant Involvement
South Cambridgeshire
District Council

What tenants have been involved in



Worked with us on our communications charter to tenants and leaseholders.



Attended national conferences to meet with and share experiences with other involved tenants.



Involved in interview panels for key roles in housing.



Reviewed policies such as our damp and mould policy



Received training on how to scrutinise services so it can be carried out effectively.



Chairing the panel meetings to make sure the meetings are led by tenants.

Meet your current tenant representatives Coffee Morning



February 2025

We are planning a coffee (& tea) morning in February 2025 for you to meet your current tenant representatives and volunteers. You will have the opportunity to chat to them and ask them questions about their involvement and how they have helped us at SCDC and enjoy a cuppa. Further information will be shared on our website and social media platforms.

  **@InSouthCambs** Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

Complaints

What our survey said:

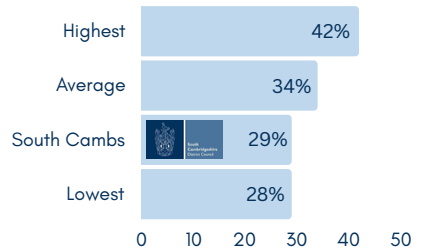


Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints



How we compare to other organisations

When compared to other organisations South Cambridgeshire are amongst the lowest scoring of other organisations at 29% with the lowest being 28%



What this means

We need to make improvements to the way we handle complaints. We will be looking at ways to improve our communication overall but particularly when it comes to complaint handling.

What we are doing



Staff training on handling complaints



Our communications charter sets out expectations for both tenants and staff on how we should be communicating.



151

complaints received in 2023 to 2024



126

Stage 1

An expression of dissatisfaction that is not able to be resolved at first contact so requires investigation and response from Service Manager



23

Stage 2

Unresolved at stage 1 so investigation is required by the Head of Service



2

Stage 3

Reached the Housing Ombudsman (a free, independent, and impartial service that investigates complaints and resolves disputes involving tenants and leaseholders)

How to raise a complaint

If you are unhappy with the way your enquiry has been handled please follow our complaints procedure.

We take all complaints seriously and will provide you with a response within ten working days.



Online at: www.scambs.gov.uk



Calling: 01954 713 000



Email: feedback@scambs.gov.uk

Writing to:



South Cambridgeshire Hall,
Cambourne Business Park,
Cambourne, Cambridge,
CB23 6EA

What you said & what we did



I am not happy with the way disabled adaptations are handled



We have reviewed our Disabled Adaptations Policy which includes target timescales and improved record keeping and clearer communication.



It has taken too long for issues to be fixed with my new build home.



We have reviewed our defects reporting process to ensure that any defects are reported to the correct person and not confused with our normal repairs reporting system. A bespoke monitoring system has been implemented and additional training held for frontline staff.



I am not happy with the way you have responded to my query and it has taken too long.



To improve how the Council communicates with its tenants and leaseholders, a Communications Charter was developed with tenant representatives. This sets out our standards in terms of timescales and we are currently in the process of developing a set of guidelines for staff to ensure we have a consistent approach in how we communicate.
See page 20 for the full communications charter.

Communica

for tenants &

Our commitments to you:

- We will respond to your enquiry promptly and in a fair and respectful manner.
- We will use plain language free from jargon in a way that is appropriate to your needs. This may include in a larger font, a different language or format.
- We will listen and learn from your feedback and use this to improve the service we provide to you.

The Council's values are linked to our communications commitments to you.



Ambitious - Our ambition is to improve the way we communicate with you. To make sure we respond promptly when you contact us.



Collaborative - We will work with you and use your feedback to improve our service.



Compassionate - We will respect and listen to you and be empathetic when communicating with you.



Accountable - We will take ownership when you contact us and make it our responsibility to ensure you get a response. We will apologise and make sure we learn from our mistakes if we get things wrong.

tions Charter

leaseholders

How we will communicate with you

These are our standard response times but we will always aim to answer your query as quickly as possible.



By email

We will acknowledge all emails within **three working days**, and fully respond within **ten working days**.



By post

We will reply to all letters within **ten working days**.



By telephone

We will answer your call within **two minutes**.
We will tell you the name of our organization and the person answering your call.

We aim to resolve your enquiry there and then. If we cannot, then we will get the appropriate person to ring you by the end of the next working day.



In person

If we visit you we will **carry identification** that you can check with a phone call to our contact centre on 01954 713 000.

We will arrive at the time we say we will, or give you as much notice as possible if we have to change the time. If you would like to visit our offices, please call and make an appointment.

How you can



www.scambs.gov.uk/report-your-repair
0800 085 1313



For enquiries about your tenancy or grounds maintenance: duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk



For enquiries about planned upgrades to your home: operations@scambs.gov.uk



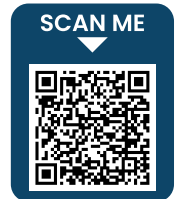
For enquiries about getting involved in tenant groups or activities: resident.involvement@scambs.gov.uk



For any shared ownership, leasehold or right to buy enquiries: home.ownership@scambs.gov.uk



Online forms
www.scambs.gov.uk/housing



01954 713 000

contact us



South Cambs Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
CB23 6EA



If you are unhappy with the way your enquiry has been handled please follow our complaints procedure.
We take all complaints seriously and will provide you with a response within ten working days.

Visit: www.scambs.gov.uk or scan the qr code



Out of Hours after 5pm	
Dangerous structures	0300 303 8389
Homelessness	01253 501 117
Environmental Health emergency	08456 095 437



South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cams
CB23 6EA
01954 713 000
www.scambs.gov.uk