



Southampton City Council Housing Services Annual Report 2023/24

**Including Tenant Satisfaction
Measures results**

Inside this year's report:

- Tenant satisfaction survey results
- Investment in your homes
- Improving our repairs service
- Recruitment of new Tenant Board members



Welcome from...



Councillor Frampton

Cabinet Member Housing

Welcome to the 2023/2024 Housing Services Annual Review & Tenant Satisfaction Measures Report.

This contains feedback from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey that took place earlier in the year. Tenants' views matter, so we will continue to review and improve the way we do things based on your feedback. We want to deliver the service you deserve.

We understand that many of you will have concerns and questions about the housing service we provide. I want to assure all of our residents that we are determined to see improvements. This report gives you a blueprint for how we will achieve that.

I'd like to thank everyone who has been involved in the creation of this report.



Jamie Brenchley

Director of Housing Services

Over the last few years, our performance relating to our housing landlord function has fallen below an acceptable standard. We must and will do better.

We recognise that tenants deserve a safe, decent, good quality home that provides you with the opportunity to live a better life, a place where you can thrive and live well. We understand that a home extends beyond the building, it's the community in which you live that is just as important. Building strong, safe communities that residents can be proud of is fundamental to us.

Over the next year, we will transform the way we deliver our services, placing tenants at the heart of what we do. We will strive towards excellence and work with you to help hold us to account when we are making decisions that affect the quality of your homes and services.

We are committed to improving our services to you and learning from all the feedback you provide. Your voices really do matter.

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Tenant satisfaction measures

All social landlords must collect data annually to comply with the new regulatory requirements from the Regulator of Social Housing from April 2023. These new measures are called the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

The purpose of the new measures is to assess how well landlords are performing in England in providing good quality homes and services. Throughout this report you will see how we performed over the last year.

Customer survey

As part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures a customer survey needs to take place. Southampton City Council commissioned an independent survey company, Acuity Research and Practice to carry this out on our behalf. This survey was carried out throughout January and February of 2024.

Customer survey results:



1,674
responses (11% of tenants)



1,271
by telephone



403
online



Our next survey will
take place in January –
February 2025

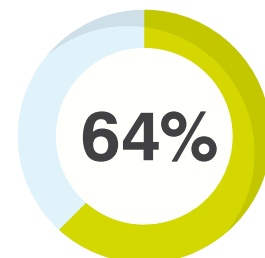


“I volunteered to help write this report as I want to make sure that we include the right information that is of value to tenants. I know how important it is for us to check the Council’s performance in relation to the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Tenants need to know what changes and improvements are being made and when these will be carried out.”

Vicky-Lee Egerton, tenant representative

What we learnt

Satisfaction with overall service:



This figure is down from 72% and we are using the feedback from the survey and performance information to find out more about how we can improve as a landlord. Our established tenant groups are helping us with this work.

Respectful and helpful engagement

In response to these results we want to improve how we engage and respond to tenant feedback. We are currently working on our new Tenant Engagement strategy, so look out for this coming soon.

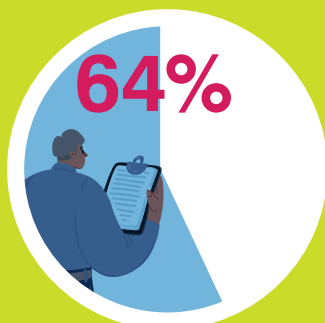
We also want to improve the information we provide for tenants and we will be reviewing our website to ensure that the content is clear, easy to understand and relevant.

We will continue to improve on our performance in treating tenants fairly and with respect and use diversity data to proactively understand and meet tenant needs.

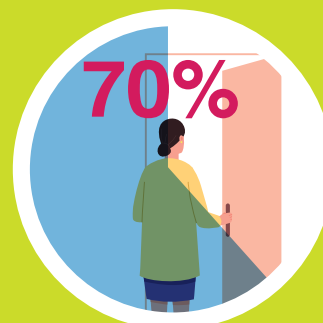
We want to improve our communication with you. We have centralised our telephone calls to improve the consistency and quality of the services you receive. Please let us know your feedback on this change.



54% satisfied we listen to tenant views and act upon them

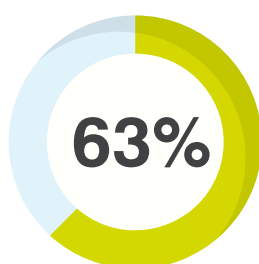


64% satisfied we keep tenants informed about things that matter to them



70% satisfied we treat tenants fairly and with respect

We also asked tenants how easy they found us to deal with as a landlord and **63%** of you thought we were easy to deal with.



Tenant Involvement

Work of our groups

Tenants Scrutiny Panel – reviewed the sign up process and now we have a simpler, more efficient procedure in place. Improved information available on website for extra care schemes.

Repairs Panel – improved the accompanied viewing checklist. This identified a need to promote lift breakdowns in different formats, to ensure the appropriate contact points were included.

Tenant Resources Group – carried out an energy survey and are pushing for more energy efficiency works.

Tenant Inspectors – produced videos which can be used as a training package for staff on Council housing stigma in Southampton. All new staff in Housing Services now receive this training as part of their induction.

Supported Housing – took part in the consultation for the new Allocations policy.

Everyday heroes

A number of tenants have been busy this year brightening up their local communities and working hard to represent the concerns of their neighbours.

Residents living in supported housing at James Street launched a new programme of social activities open to anyone in their local area aged 55 and over. Fun activities including games and coffee mornings are available for all residents. Lots of our supported housing schemes around the city have computer and lunch clubs, arts and crafts sessions, keep fit and lots more.

Please contact your local housing office to find out how you can get involved and take part in these activities.

Tenants Conference – our annual Tenants Conference allowed several tenant groups to showcase their activities.

Bizzie Bees Garden Club in Bassett showed off their impressive garden.

Toronto Court in Millbrook unveiled a new sculpture which was funded through our Decent Neighbourhood's programme to celebrate the scheme's historic links to Canada.



Tenant Resources Group



Tenants Conference



Tenant Inspectors



Bizzie Bees Garden Club



Toronto Court

Effective handling of complaints



We need to improve our handling of complaints and as a result we have:

- ✓ set up a new complaints panel to fully investigate and learn from the complaints we receive and feedback to tenants.
- ✓ funded a new post to ensure we deal with complaints effectively, so we deliver responses in the timescales given.
- ✓ ensured we use tenant feedback to improve our services.
- ✓ promoted the different ways that tenants can make a complaint in Tenants' Link soton.cc/HousingComplaint



21 Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes.



42% Stage 1 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling timescales.



4 Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 homes.



100% Stage 2 complaints responded to within complaint handling timescales.

* please note stats have been rounded up to nearest whole number



"I know that the council takes complaints from tenants very seriously and that tenant feedback helps to improve the services we receive. They do need to improve the response times to Stage 1 complaints". Ray White, tenant representative



On the road to improvement

We received a complaint about our Housing Management Transfer process and as a result we updated our policy to allow for an appeals process. There was previously no right or process for appeals.

Following feedback from the Housing Ombudsman, we need to provide more comprehensive information about the support services that we offer our customers.

We changed the information on our repairs web pages to make it easier for customers to understand what help was available for those customers who are vulnerable throughout the year due to loss of heating.

Due to feedback on the handling of our complaints and the consistency of responses all staff have received further training on how to manage complaints.



We're looking for Tenant Board Members

- ❓ Are you a Southampton City Council tenant?
- ❓ Do you understand the wants, needs of your neighbours and community?
- ❓ Are you committed to creating a positive change?

Why not join our Quality and Assurance Governance Board? We are looking for tenants who are passionate about improving the services for tenants in the city.

Keep an eye out for more information on these new roles in Tenants' Link.

Maintaining homes

Did you know that in the last year we replaced:



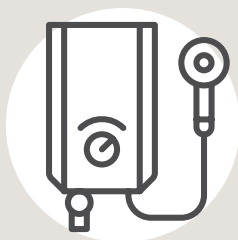
263

Bathrooms



618

doors in blocks
and homes



558

boilers



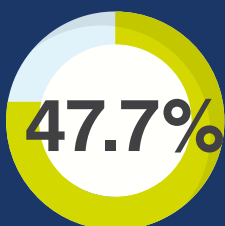
135

kitchens



245

homes had their
lofts insulated



of our homes do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.



We want to reduce the number of non-decent homes by 50% by 2027.

You told us in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey that the most important concern for you was that Southampton City Council provides you with a well-maintained home. We recognise that we need to do more and that is why we will be investing £25million into your homes over the next three years.

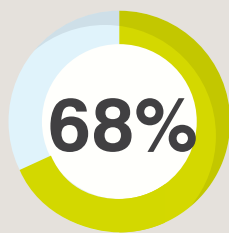
We will be sharing details of any planned improvements to your home directly with you as well as sharing information about our overall plans in Tenants' Link.



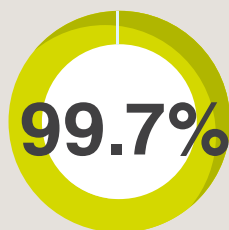
An improvement

We have entered into an agreement with Trident Maintenance Services who will be carrying out work on our behalf to ensure that our properties meet the Decent Homes Standard

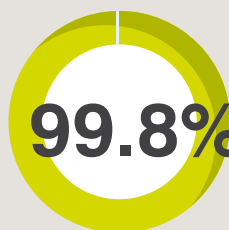
Maintaining building safety



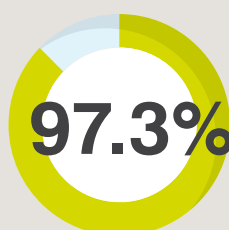
Satisfaction that the home is safe



Gas safety checks completed



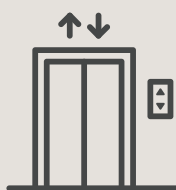
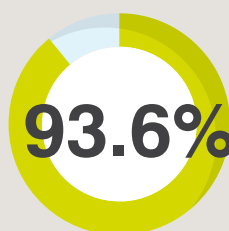
Fire safety checks completed



Asbestos safety checks completed



Water safety checks completed



Lift safety checks completed



We want to achieve and maintain 100% compliance with all our quality checks by:

- updating our systems and reviewing our processes.
- recruiting additional staff.

We are currently a national leader with regards to fire safety in tenants' homes and communal areas.



Keeping properties in good repair



How satisfied tenants are with our repairs service?



72%

Satisfied with repairs – this was our highest satisfaction rating in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey.



52.4%

of repairs completed within target timescale.



66%

satisfied with time taken to complete most recent repair.



66%

satisfied the home is well maintained.

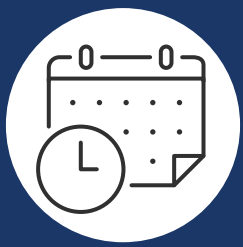
How are we improving Current improvements include

- reviewing our current practices and processes to improve our response times for repairs.
- investing in technology to streamline and automate repair services.
- multi-skilling our workforce to enhance productivity.
- minimising rent loss due to empty properties needing repairs.

Maintaining good quality homes underpinned by an outstanding maintenance and repairs service is the greatest way we can improve your satisfaction with our services.

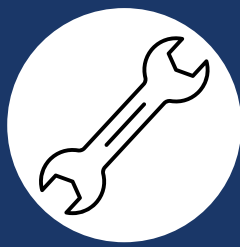


How we are doing with our repairs service?



97%

APPOINTMENTS
KEPT



78%

REPAIRS
COMPLETED
FIRST TIME



26

DAYS TO
COMPLETE A
REPAIR



94.9%

EMERGENCY
REPAIRS
COMPLETED
ON TIME

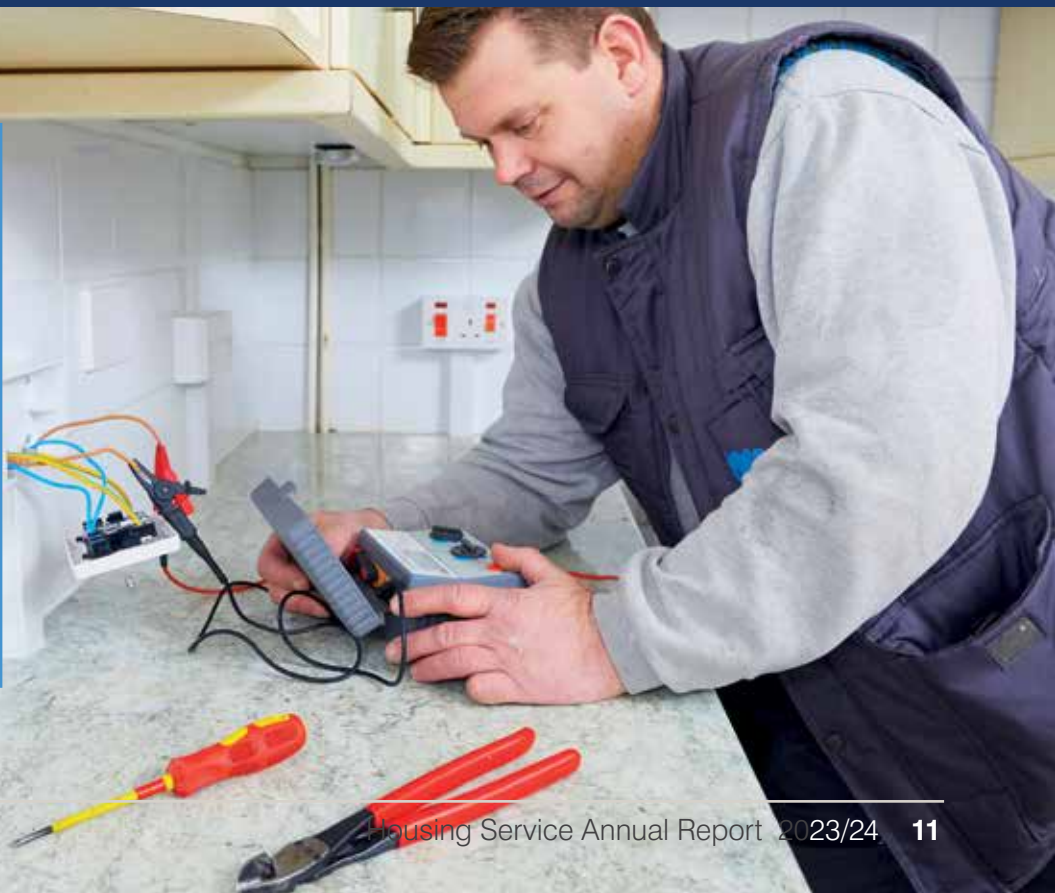


40,430

TOTAL NUMBER
OF REPAIRS
COMPLETED

“We are waiting longer for our repairs to be completed, and we need to see an improvement in this. We recognise that repairs staff are working very hard, and we hope to report on the forthcoming changes to the repairs service very soon.”

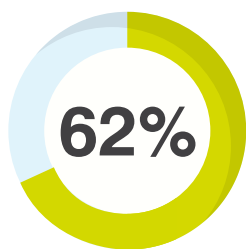
Vicky-Lee Egerton –
Tenant representative



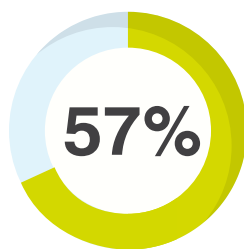


Ronnie one of our Thornhill Block Reps

Responsible neighbourhood management



62% satisfied we keep communal areas clean and well maintained



57% satisfied we make a positive contribution to neighborhoods

How we have improved

To improve the cleanliness in our blocks we have changed how we work.

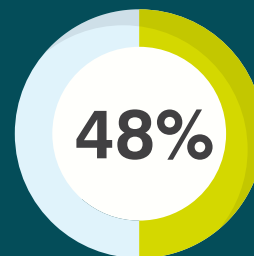
We have recruited three new cleaning supervisors who will carry out regular audits of communal areas. Check out your block noticeboard for more information on this.



“As a tenant representative, I would like to see tenants take responsibility for their areas and estates as well as the council improving its’ standards in our blocks and estates. I think it would be a good idea for us to have competitions for best block and estate to promote this idea.”

Lynda Walton Tenant Representative

Anti-social Behaviour



48% are satisfied with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour. This figure shows an improvement from previous years, but we do need to do more.



35 cases of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 homes.



1.6 case of hate crime per 1,000 homes.



We responded to 547 cases of anti-social behaviour.



We served seven Notices of Seeking Possession for anti-social behaviour.



We referred 253 cases to NFS Mediation (an independent service we use for dispute resolution).

We are currently reviewing our procedures for managing cases of anti-social behaviour and will be improving our publicity and making it easier for you to report this.

Junior Neighbourhood Warden^s

Our junior wardens have been working very hard over the last year taking part in a number of community activities and events



24 Junior Warden projects

735



Follow us on Facebook

Marathon Water Station (Charity Support)



3 Fire Station Days



22



22 Intergenerational events bringing younger and older people together



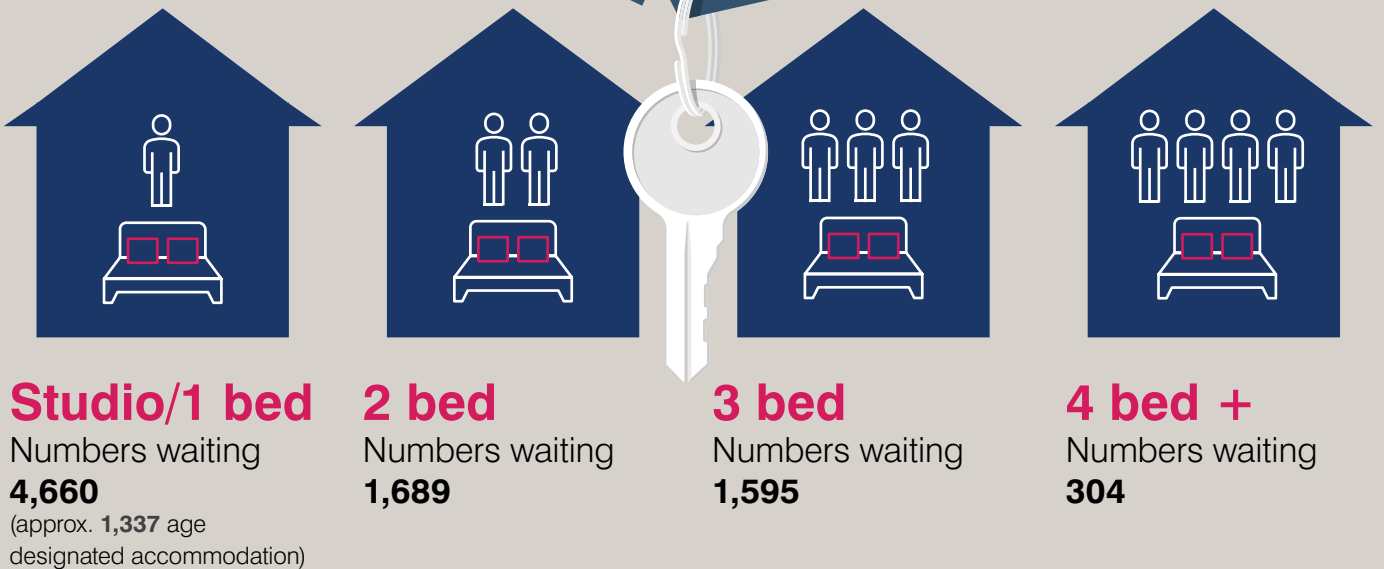
Play Day (2-3,000 attendees, families and children)

Remembrance Sunday Parade



Housing Management in numbers

8,248 Total number on list able to bid



Right to buy 2023-2024:

	Flats	Houses	Total
Number of claims received	70	74	144
Number of admissions	31	39	70
Number of Cancelled/Withdrawn	53	61	114
Number of completions	18	18	36
Total discount on completions	£2,783,761.00		

Tackling Tenancy Fraud 2023/24

Savings made in tackling tenancy fraud	£210,000.00
Properties Returned (from RTB applications)	2 sublet 3 abandoned
Total properties returned to us	29

Income and spending

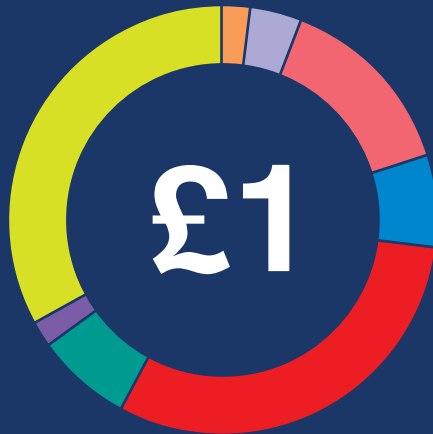
Rent

Total Revenue Income
2023/4 financial year

97.7% of rent was collected against our income collection target



How we spend the money



£1,094,185

During 2023/24 the Welfare Rights and Money Advice Team gave advice on benefits to Southampton residents and helped them to claim over **£1,094,185** in previously unclaimed welfare benefits.

£126,163

debts written off by creditors

The Team also supported tenants to find sustainable solutions to their debt problems, which enabled them to get their finances back on track - resulting in over **£126,163.00** of debts being written off by creditors.



Capital expenditure £36.9m



Good advice can make a difference

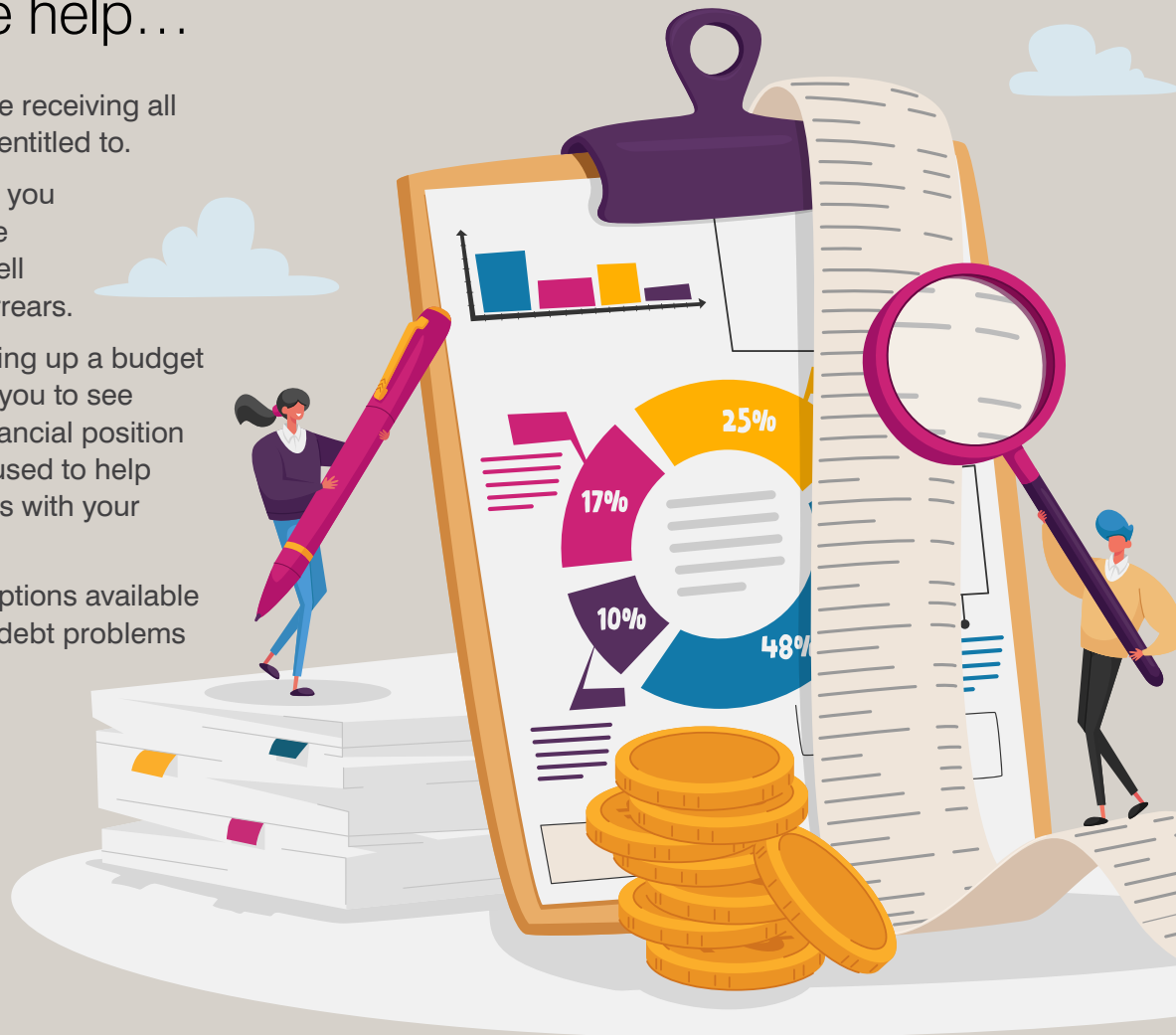
In our survey, we asked tenants about the cost of living and whether they struggle to meet the cost of several expenses. Despite inflation decreasing, a number of tenants were worried about the future.

If you are struggling to make your income stretch to cover the increases in energy bills, food and fuel, there is support to help you.

The Welfare Rights and Money Advice team can help with debt and money worries. The team offers free confidential advice to help you manage your debts.

How can we help...

- We will check you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.
- Look at ways to help you manage your income and outgoings, as well as your debts and arrears.
- Assist you with drawing up a budget plan that will enable you to see exactly what your financial position is. This can also be used to help negotiate repayments with your creditors.
- Advise on the best options available to help resolve your debt problems



Tel 023 8083 2339

Email welfarights.advice@southampton.gov.uk

Visit southampton.gov.uk/moneyadvice