

# London Borough of Tower Hamlets

## Housing Options Service

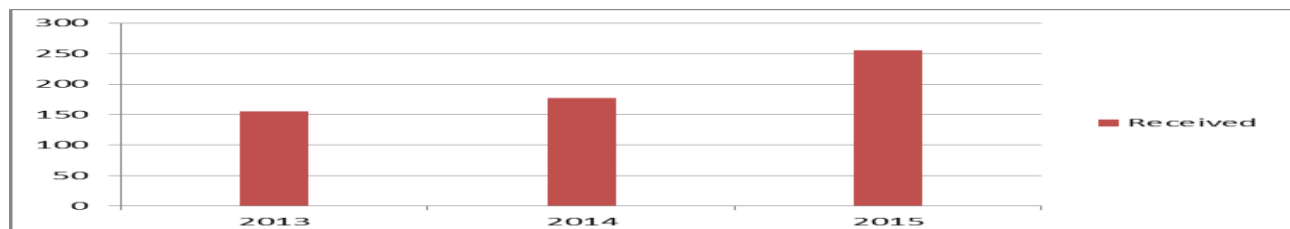
### Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary

December 2015

#### Introduction

This document is the summary of the results from our annual Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS), conducted in December 2015.

The CSS is our main method of mass service user consultation, being sent to over 2000 temporary accommodation tenants this year. With an incentive of entry into a £250 prize draw, we received 225 responses, equalling a response rate of 11% - our best yet - and another welcome improvement in service user engagement levels.

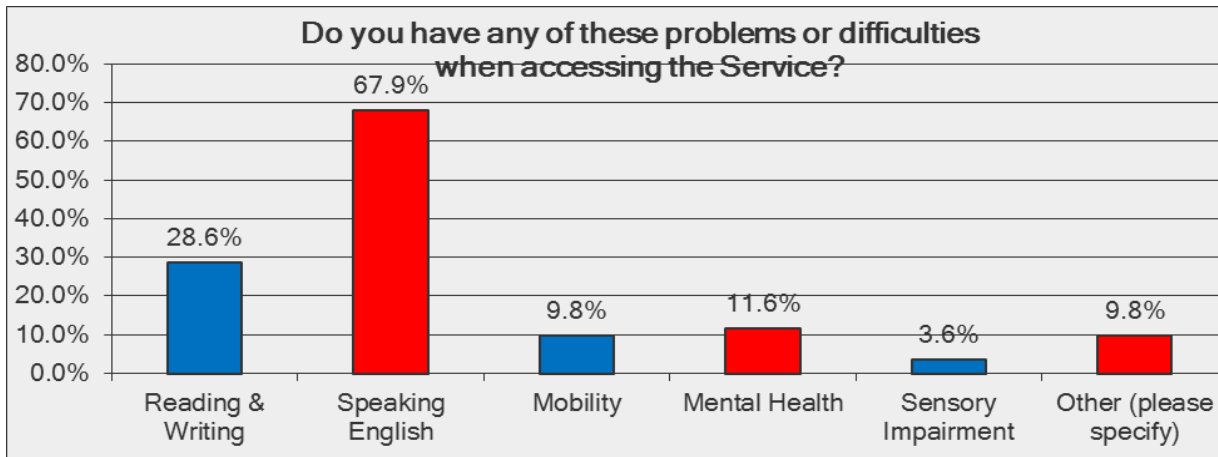


#### Communication

We generally communicate with service users by letter, telephone calls and by using information contained on our website – the related survey questions help to validate the effectiveness of each of these communication channels. We also produce two newsletters a year – InTouch – which is now available on our website ([www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)).



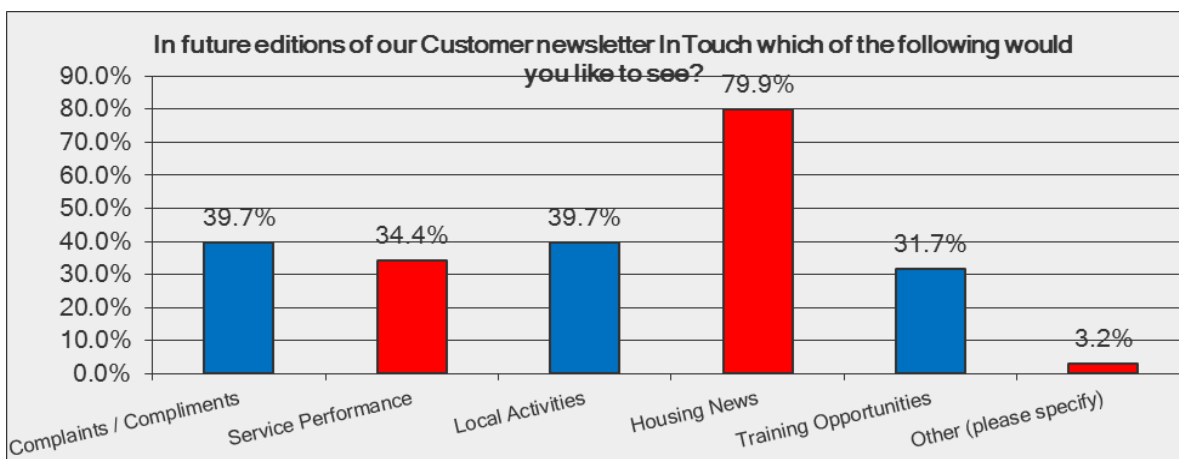
- When dealing with your calls 55% of our customers said the calls were answered 'promptly'.
- 74% of calls were dealt with respectfully.
- 68% of calls were dealt with Satisfactory.



The Housing Options service will be advertising ESOL classes in the reception area and future newsletters. Interpreting services are provided for customers who have difficulty speaking, reading and writing English.

### Website and InTouch

Both our website and In Touch newsletter have always had positive responses through our surveys carried out in previous years.

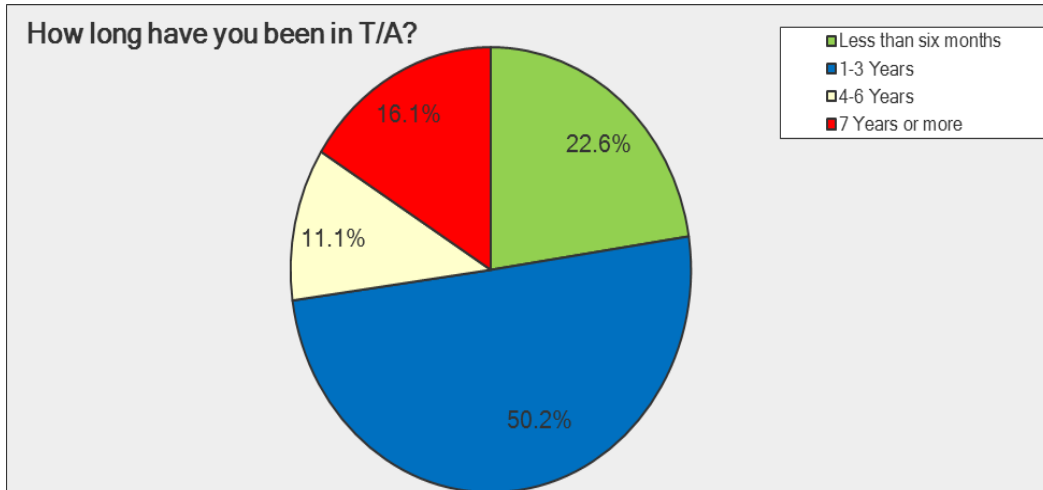


- Of the 61% of Customers that had visited our website, 72% of them found what they were looking for. We are not satisfied with this result and are working with the website managers to improve navigation and content of the Housing Options pages.
- 79% of customers who answered what would they like to see in future editions of our InTouch said Housing news.

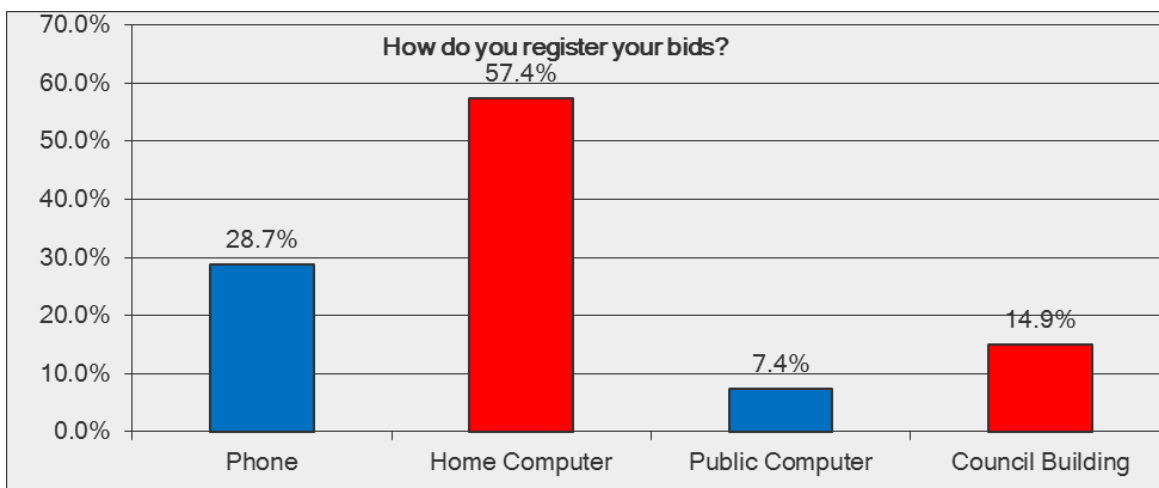
We aim to provide information on all the answers above in future editions of the In Touch newsletter and to publish more information on our website for our customers.

## Temporary Accommodation / Bidding

In this year's survey we wanted to find out a bit more about our customers and the processes they have gone through in being placed into temporary accommodation. We also wanted to find out the satisfaction levels of our customers when bidding for permanent accommodation.



- 73% of our customers who answered had been in Temporary accom less than 3 years. Of these 23% being in TA less than 6 months.
- 79% of our customers found the bidding system easy..
- Of the 199 customers that answered 'do you need help with bidding' 34% of them said yes. This is something we aim to target running workshops in our reception and step by step guides in future In Touch newsletters.

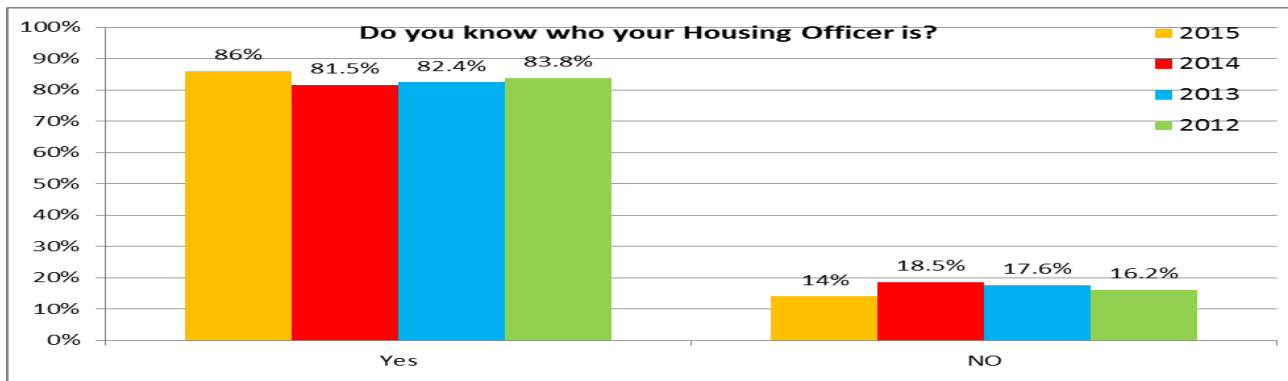


- The main method of our customers registering their bids is through a home computer.

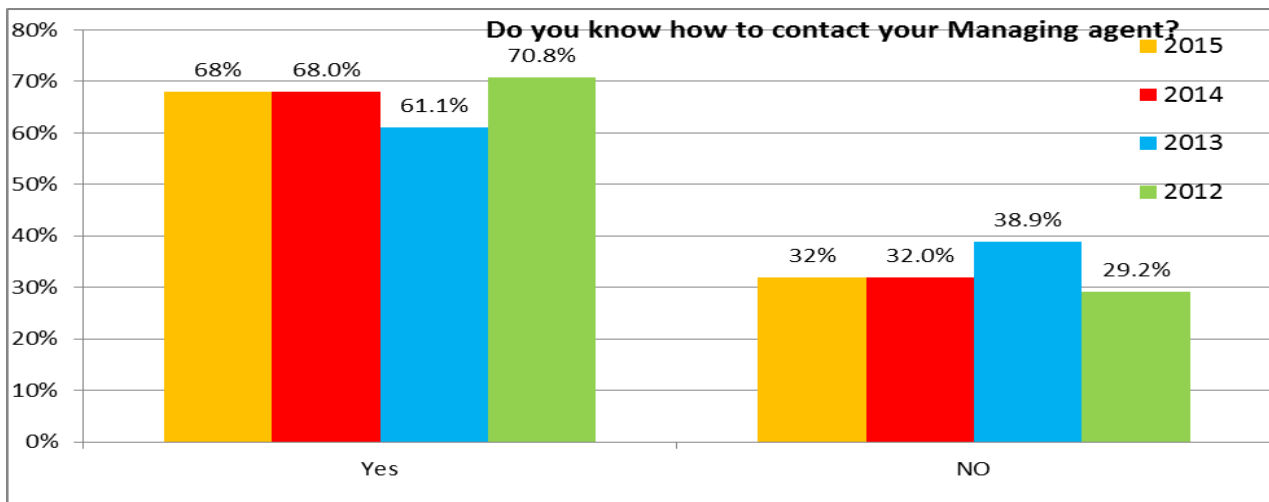
## Housing Management

It has been 5 years since the service established the generic Housing Management Team, merging the functions previously carried out by the separate Customer Liaison, Income and Accommodation teams. This merger has improved the customer journey by reducing the number of officers they need to deal with in relation to their temporary accommodation from three to one.

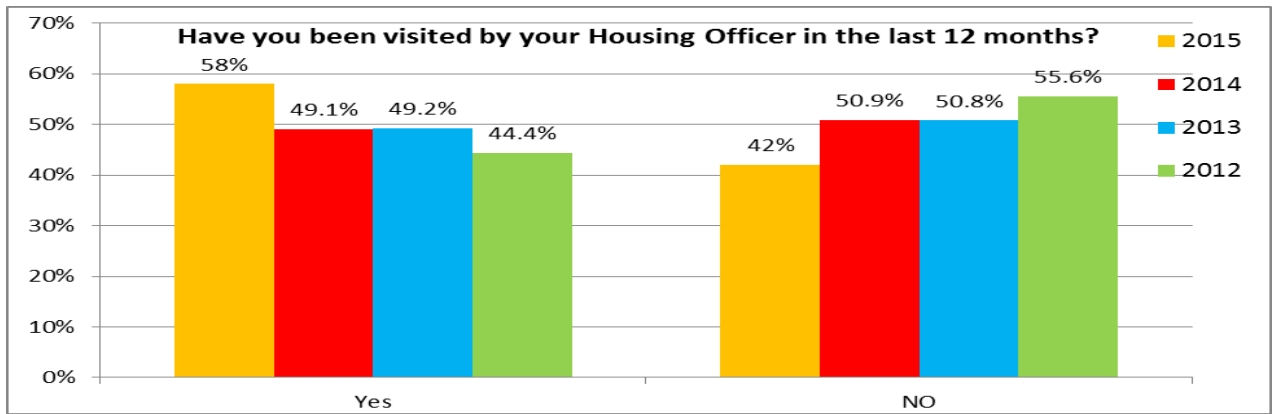
We asked the same questions in this part of the survey as we did in previous years to monitor the answers and improve as a service.



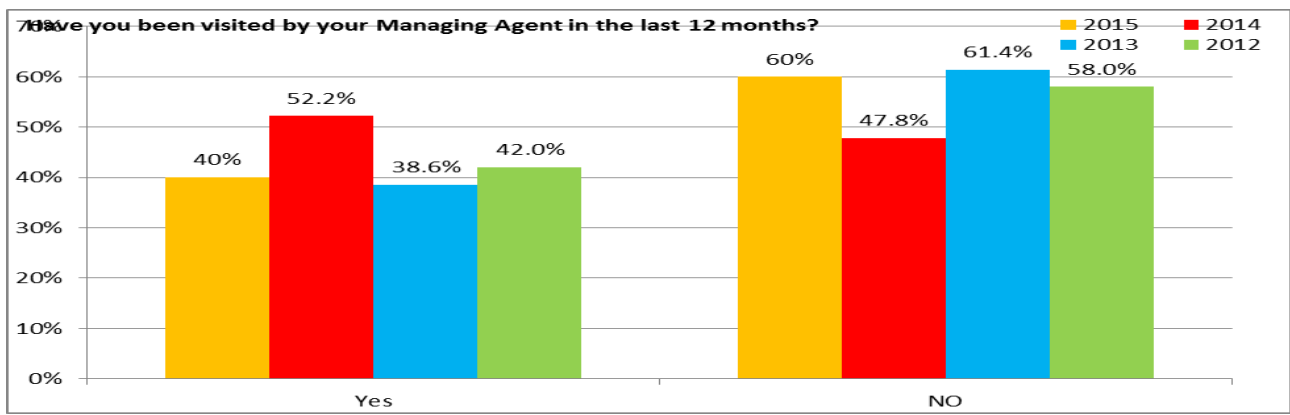
- This reflects the requirement for all Housing Officers to carry out a settling in visit within two weeks of every placement.



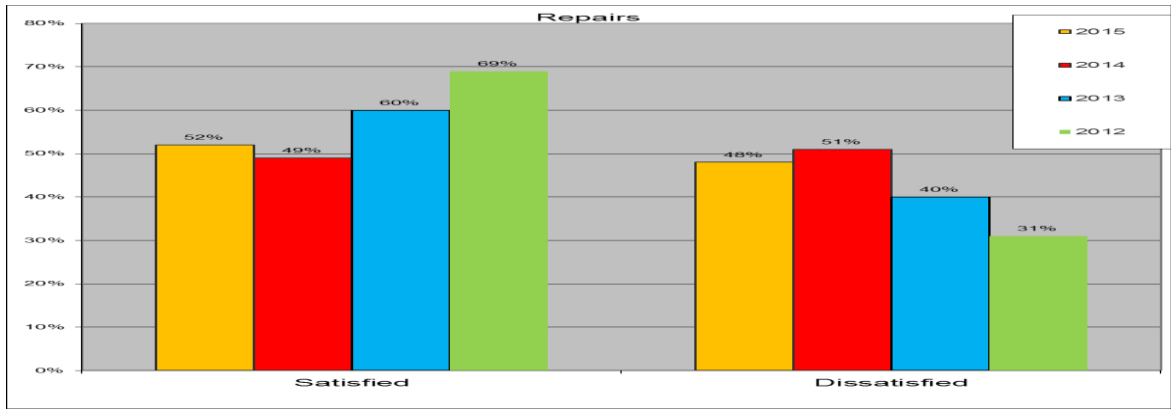
- 68% of customers knew who their Managing agent was, . This indicates a need to improve the profile of the managing agent and to ensure they are fulfilling their obligation to carry out regular inspections of their properties. The service has carried out a review of all property files to check whether landlords have submitted inspection forms and will be following up with those who have not.



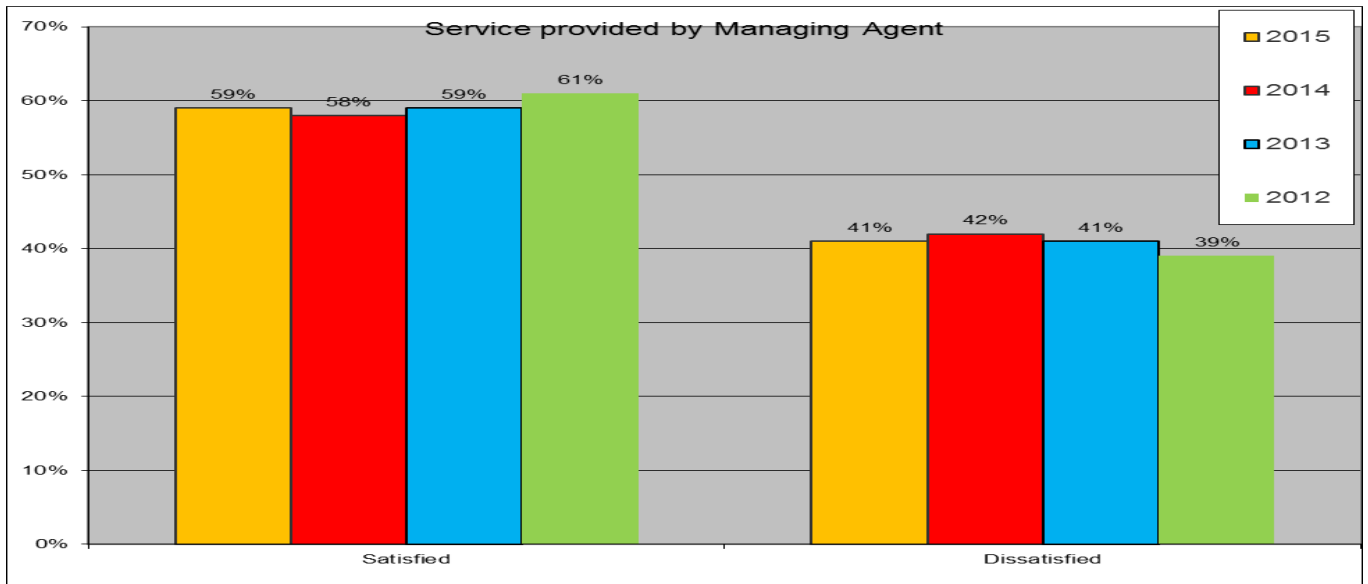
- Although this reflects a 9% increase in the number of customers who have been visited by their Housing Officer in the last year, it will be necessary to achieve further improvements in the coming period.



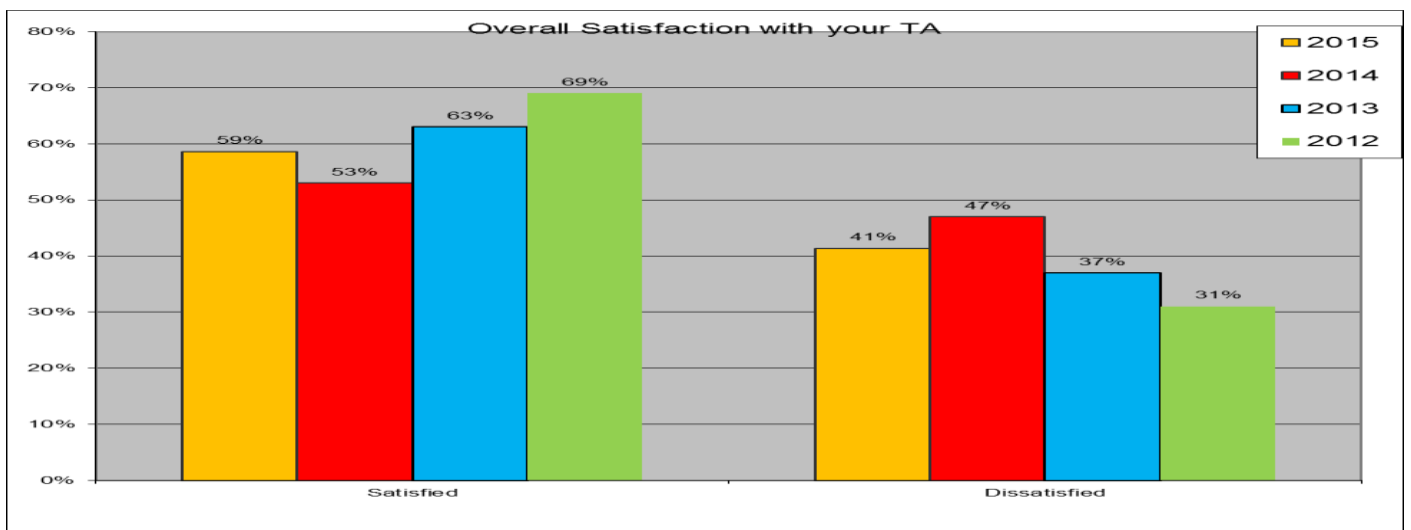
- Only 40% of our customers had been visited by their Managing agent, this is a decrease from previous years. We aim to improve these figures and ensure that Managing Agents are meeting their contractual duties.



- 52% of customers are satisfied or very satisfied with the repairs carried out in their property. While an improvement on the previous year this is not satisfactory and reflects a reduction in overall satisfaction with accommodation since 2012. In large part this will be due to the increase in out of borough placements, the use of nightly paid accommodation and B&B, however this is an area where we need to address the performance of the landlords who are responsible for maintaining the properties we use.



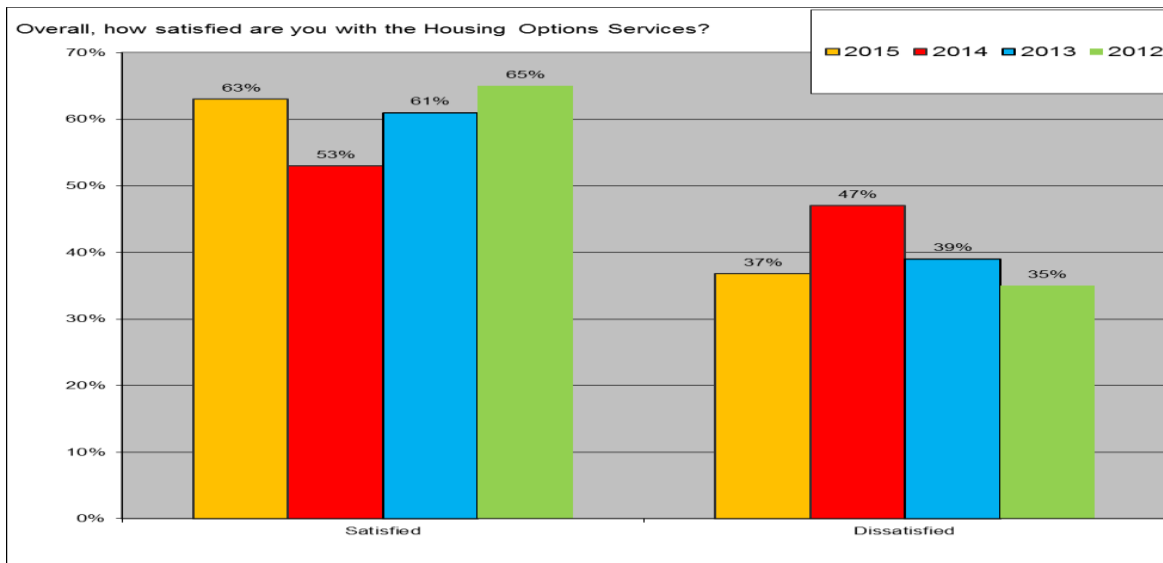
- Satisfaction with the Managing Agent, at 59% is a slight increase from the 2014 results.



- Overall Satisfaction with Temporary accommodation was up by 6% from 53% to 59%. This is an improvement on last year, but again reflects general dissatisfaction with the location of temporary accommodation and the fact that most of the respondents will have had an extended period in B&B accommodation within the last three years, reflecting the growing problem with procuring suitable self-contained properties.

In the last year we have significantly decreased the amount of family households being placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation. This is due to work carried out in procuring more suitable accommodation for our customers in TA.

## Overall satisfaction



63% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall service they received, this is a 10% increase from our 2014 results and reflects the improvements that have been delivered in the service over the last 12 months

## What next?

The findings from the CSS will be fed back to our Management Team, along with copies to all teams for consideration at team meetings. Please look at these results and feedback to the Business Support Team with your comments. We want to know:

- What actions your team will be taking
- Any ideas you have that you can work on with the Business Support Team
- Any other comments on the Customer Satisfaction Survey