

**July
2012**

Tower Hamlets Housing Options Services Network Partners Newsletter

NETWORK

In February 2011 the Homeless & Housing Advice Service combined with the Council's Lettings Team to form the HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE.

Since then we have successfully continued to prevent homelessness and offer alternatives to making a homeless application.

These alternatives are critical to addressing wider housing need because, despite this Council's tremendous success in building so many new homes, the stark fact is we are unlikely to be able to build ourselves out of housing need.

The Housing Options Service has grown into a service of advice and assistance for all in housing need, not just those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In November 2011 we carried out a survey to all our Partner Organisations, we received 46 responses to this survey and the results are printed in this newsletter.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your responses, your views are very important to us and as a result of your responses we aim to improve our service.

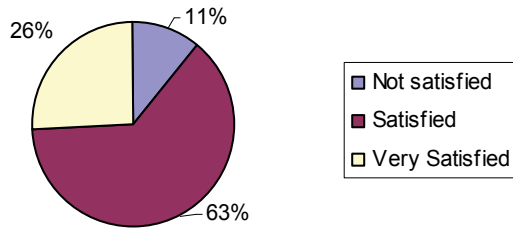
One of the main responses we took from this survey is that you would prefer your Network newsletter to be sent via email instead of via post, we've acted on these findings and will now send the newsletter via email.

**We hope you enjoy our new look newsletter and we are always open to improvements so if you have any suggestions please email;
business.support@towerhamlets.gov.uk**

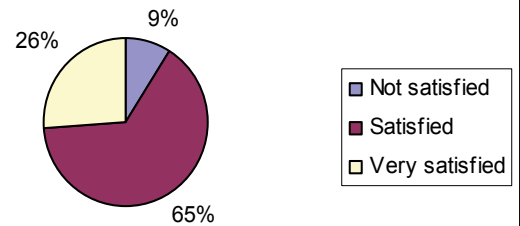
Housing Options Partner Survey Results

A big thank you to all our Partners who took part in a Partner Survey, we found your answers and comments very helpful and we aim to make improvements to our services based on these results over the coming months.

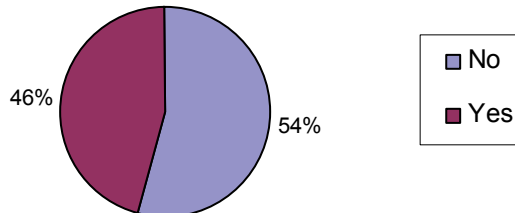
Time Taken to answer your calls %



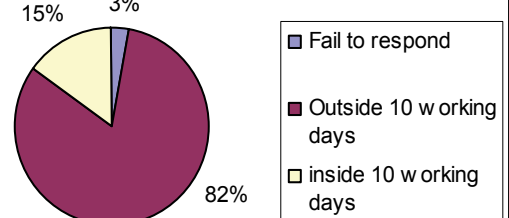
Overall, how well do we deal with your calls %



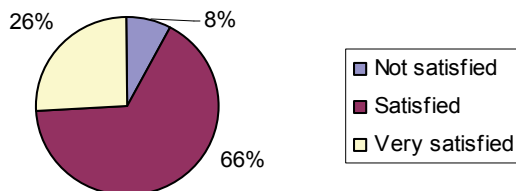
Do you think we can improve on the way we answer telephone calls %



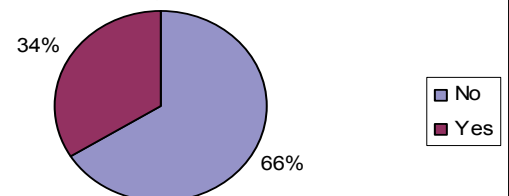
Overall, when you write to us, do we typically respond %



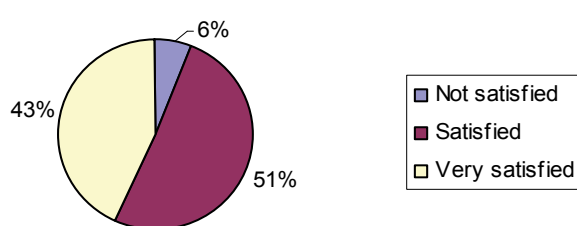
Generally how satisfied are you with our written response to you? %



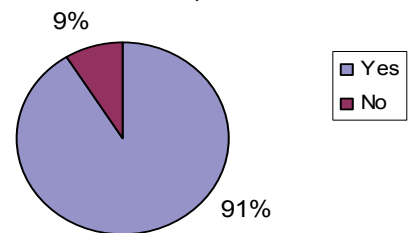
Do you think we can improve on the way we respond to correspondence? %



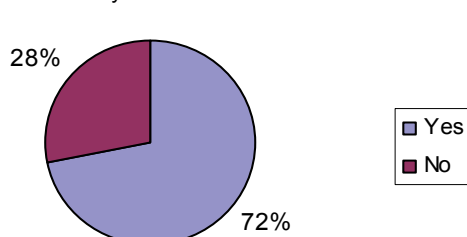
If you have met our staff in the last 12 months how satisfied were you with our encounter? %



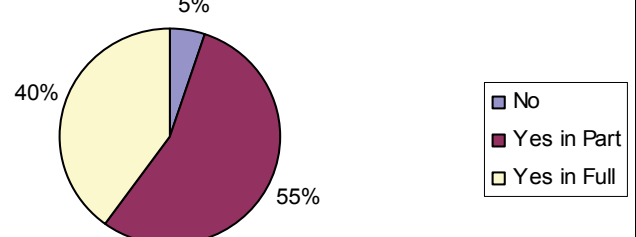
If you came to Albert Jacob House, were you satisfied with our reception? %



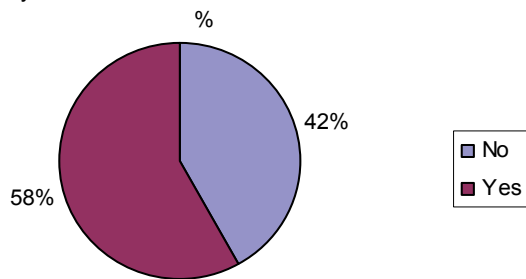
Do you think we can improve the service we provide when you meet? %



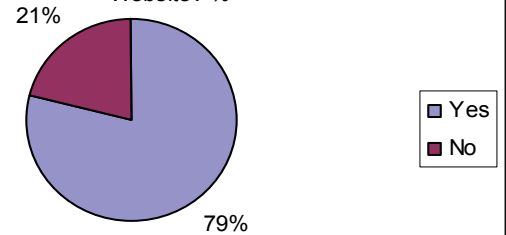
Do you know what the housing option services Does? %



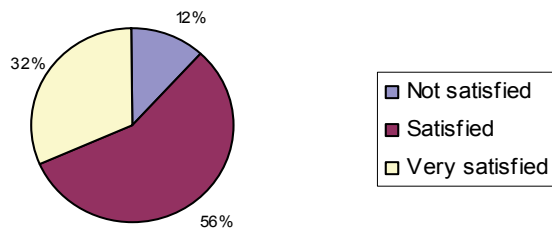
Would you like more information about our service?



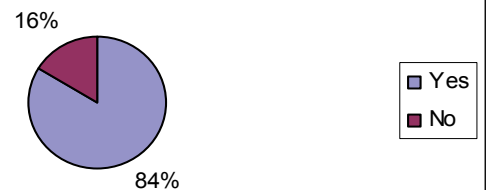
Have you ever tried to find information about our service from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Website? %



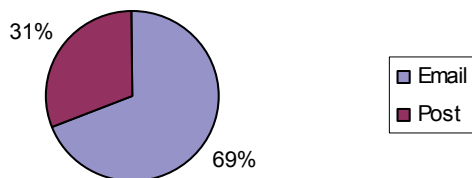
If yes, were you satisfied with the information provided online? %



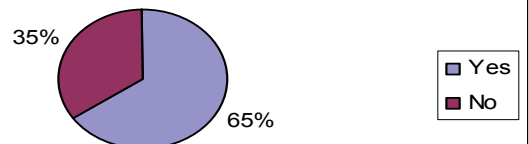
15. We are planning a series of open meetings and Focus groups for our partners - these will aim to increase understanding of how our organisation works and get feedback from partners - would you like to attend such an event? %



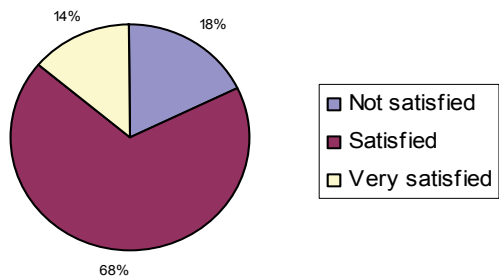
How would you prefer to receive our Network Partner newsletter? %



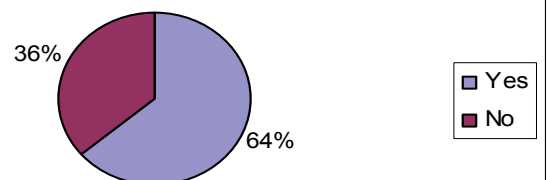
Would you like to submit articles in future editions of our Network Partners newsletter? %



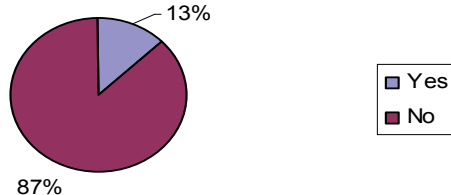
How satisfied are you with the referral process? %



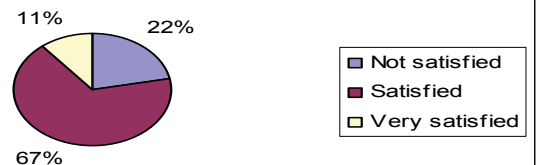
Do you know how to make a complaint about our service? %



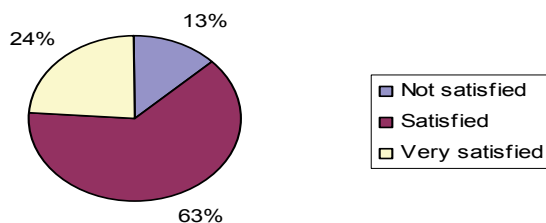
Have you ever made a complaint about the our service? %



Were you satisfied with the way your complaint was dealt with? %



Overall, how satisfied are you with the service we provide %



ONCE AGAIN A BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY, WE LOOK FORWARD TO PUTTING YOUR SUGGESTIONS INTO PLACE.

Launch of Tower Hamlets HOMEFINDER.

Tower Hamlets Council is launching a new Lettings Agency aimed at private landlords - HOMEFINDER.

HOMEFINDER will, in partnership with local Managing Agents, offer a wide range of services to private landlords.

These services will include non-refundable finders' fees; fast and efficient housing benefit service; empty homes grants; tenant suitability checks; Landlord information services; mediation; tenant support and troubleshooting. Other services in the pipeline include insurance brokerage and enhanced Landlord Accreditation.

For those landlords who also want a property management service, HOMEFINDER will be able to put them in touch with one of our partner Managing Agents.

Having led on the development work, Tower Hamlets Council has invited the City of London to participate, recognising the value of partnership working. In order to qualify for the services of HOMEFINDER, landlords must agree to let their properties to people at or below Local Housing allowance levels.

Landlords will have to be accredited and properties will need to meet agreed standards.

Landlords wanting more information about the Agency should contact Malcolm Jones on 0207 364 7274 or by email at:

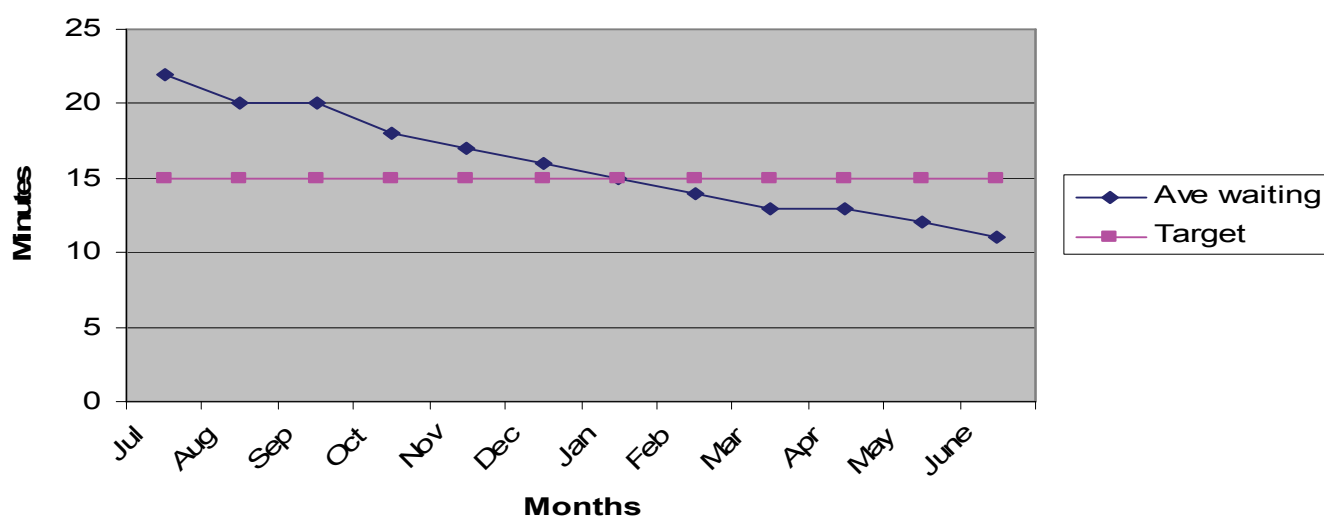
Malcolm.jones@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

The Housing Options Services are improving their waiting times.

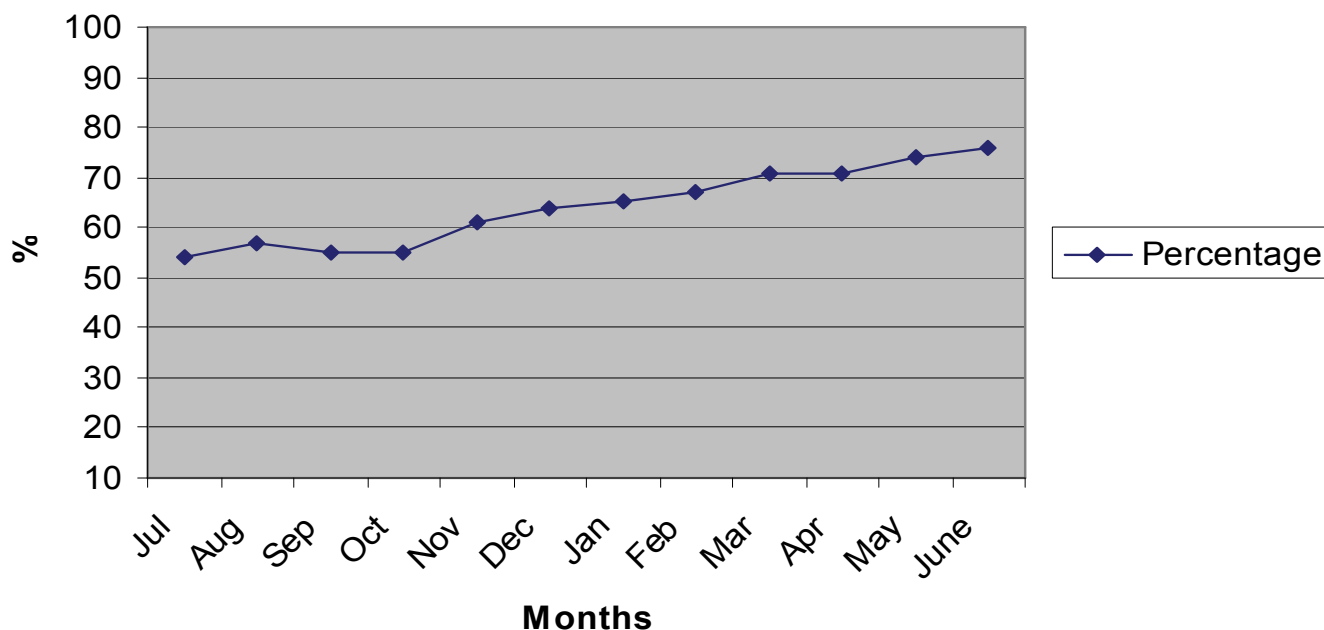
Our target is to keep our customers waiting for no more than 15 minutes, within the last 12 months the Housing Options Services waiting time Stats are now on target, we are now reaching our 15 minutes target levels.

As you can see from the graphs below we have been steadily improving each month, we aim to keep these high standards and continue to keep waiting times to a minimum.

Average Waiting Times



Percentage of clients seen within 15 minutes waiting time



Tower Hamlets Celebrates the Arrival of the Olympic Flame

Come and celebrate the arrival of the Olympic Flame in Tower Hamlets during its first day in the capital. We invite local residents to mark this unique occasion at our free community event in Stepney Green Park with a fantastic array of performances, workshops and activities for residents of all ages to enjoy.

There will be a range of live music throughout the afternoon as well as a bouncy castle and face-painting, circus and 'make & take' workshops for getting creative. A sports area will be in place for those with energy to spare, and anyone in need of a refreshing boost can enjoy delicious drinks and refreshments.

The programme also includes:

- Winners of CBBC Sport Relief Does Glee Club 2012
- Faye Guy
- Redcoat Girls Project Dance Group
- Soyttten Sen School of Performing Arts
- Fabulous Lounge Swingers
- Bowjangles
- Howard Monk

To see the full route and timings for the Olympic Torch Relay, please go to: www.london2012.com



OLYMPICS TRANSPORT FOR LONDON UPDATE

As London is turned into a huge sporting and cultural venue for the Games, I am writing to give you advance notice that there will be a number of sporting events held across London's road network.

The dates of these are 28, 29 and 31 July; 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 11 and 12 August and 9 September.

Roads will be closed along the routes at certain times and places. Many buses will also be affected; full details will be available in July on the TfL website and at affected bus stops. The following events in particular will result in significant travel disruption:

- Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 July - Men's and Women's Cycling Road Races (central London to Box Hill, Surrey via Fulham, Putney, Richmond, Hampton Court, Weybridge, Woking, Dorking, Leatherhead, Esher and Kingston)
- Thursday 2, Saturday 4 and Tuesday 7 August - Triathlon Technical Rehearsal, Women's Triathlon and Men's Triathlon (Hyde Park Corner area)
- Sunday 5 and Sunday 12 August and Sunday 9 September - Women's Marathon, Men's Olympic Marathon and Paralympic Marathons (Westminster to City of London)

We urge motorists not to be caught out by these events and to avoid driving in these areas.

[For more information on all Games roads events, including times and race routes to avoid, please click here](#)

We are running a number of roadshows to help you prepare, including one at Whitechapel Tube station on Thursday 21 June from 1400 until 1900 as well as one at the Supermarket on the Isle of Dogs (nearest station Crossharbour) on Sunday 24 June from 1100 until 1700 and also one at Wapping Overground station on Monday 9 July from 1600 until 2000. [For more information, please visit getaheadoff-hegames.com/roadshows](http://getaheadoff-hegames.com/roadshows)



TOWER HAMLETS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

36% of our Partners didn't know the London Borough of Tower Hamlets complaints procedure so here it is;

A complaint is when customers are not happy with the standard of service they have had from the council. We try to resolve all complaints immediately.

You can:

- Discuss the problem with the staff concerned or their manager to quickly and effectively resolve your problem.
- Make a formal complaint, in writing, by email or webform or by phone. You can hand a written complaint in at any council reception point. If you find it difficult to fill in a form, please ask for help from your closest council office.
- If you are not happy with the written response you can appeal to have the decision reviewed. The complaint team's details are below.
- We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days, and reply within twenty working days.
- We will advise you if we cannot complete the investigation within this time and explain why.

If you are not happy with the outcome of final stage, the Chief Executives' review, you can contact the independent watchdog, the local government ombudsman.

Contact us:

Information about making a complaint including an online form is published on the council website.

email: complaints@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Phone:

020 7364 4161 English / Bengali / Sylheti
020 7364 4853 Minicom

Or write to:

Corporate Complaints,. Tower Hamlets Town Hall
Mulberry Place 5 Clove Crescent London E14 2BG

Contact the local government ombudsman:

Local Government Ombudsman
10th Floor Millbank London SW1P 4QP

CONTACT ME

If you have any stories or information you wish to have published in the Network newsletter please contact me;

Jamie Jackson

Business Support Team

Tel: 7262

Jamie.jackson@towerhamlets.gov.uk