

Communal cleaning review consultation report

Housing strategy and engagement team
January 2025



CHESTERFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1. Background information

Towards the end of 2023 Chesterfield Borough Council's housing service completed a review of the communal cleaning service. This review was recommended by the Housing Ombudsman following their review of our complaint's response in relation to communal cleaning.

Over 270 tenants and leaseholders shared their views in the initial consultation, and some changes were made to how the service was delivered based on the feedback received.

To ensure we could understand whether the changes implemented had made a difference, we committed to undertaking a further review one year later. This follow up review has now been completed and the findings compiled into this report.

2. Methodology

The follow up consultation which could be completed via post or via a link online ran from the 13th of November 2024 to the 6th of January 2025. To ensure responses were only received from those who receive the communal cleaning service each person sent a survey was issued with a unique number.

The aim of the consultation was to gather quantitative and qualitative information to explore if the revised communal cleaning service specification is viewed as fit for purpose and delivering value for money by tenants and leaseholders.

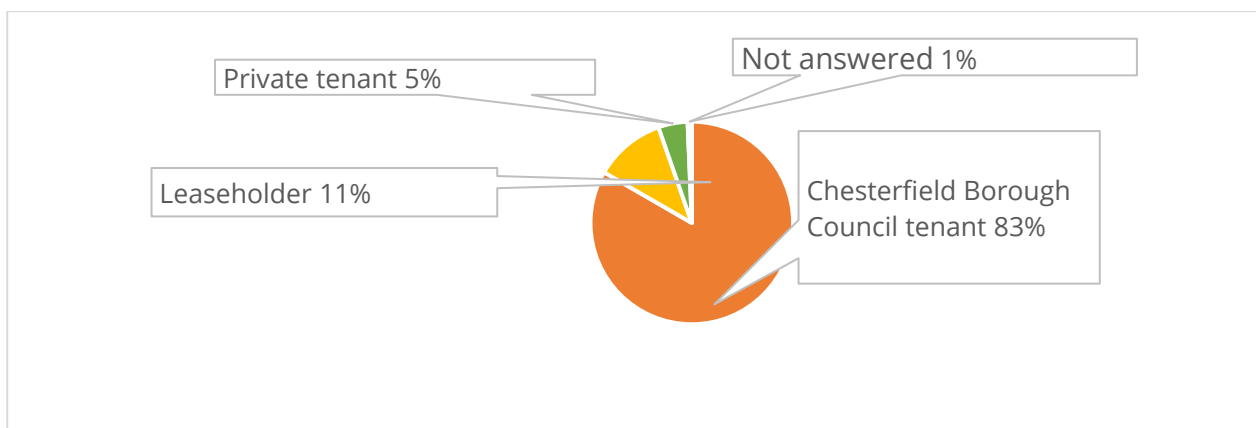
A total of 1969 people were identified and sent a survey which included a copy of the 'You said we did' changes made as a result of the previous consultation (copy attached as appendices 1) through the post. To encourage people to complete the consultation and to demonstrate appreciation for people's time, a £50 shopping voucher prize draw was offered for those who chose to enter this.

We had a total of 150 responses received from tenants, leaseholders and private tenants. This equates to a total response rate of 8%. Below is a breakdown of respondents and the length of time they have lived within their properties.

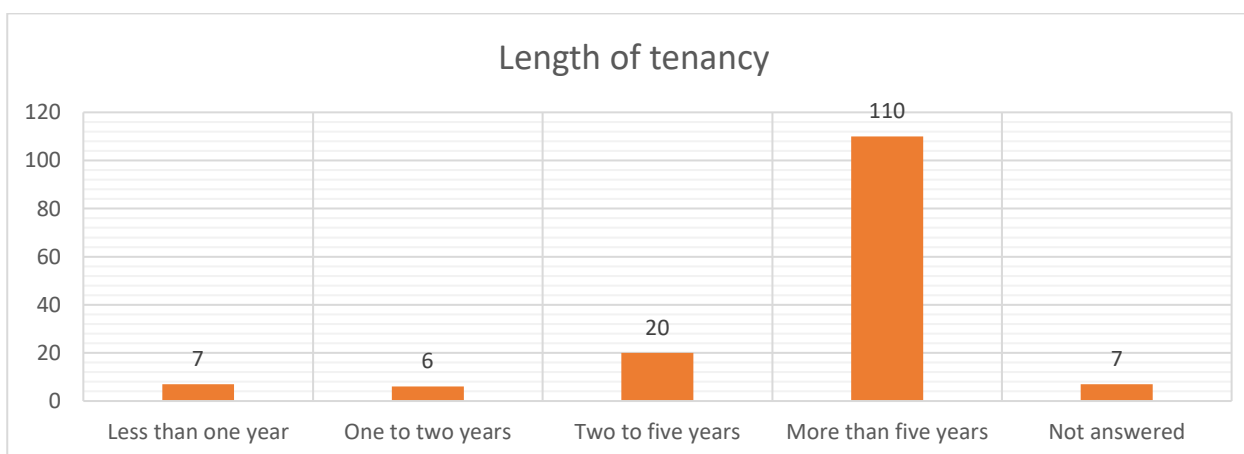
3. Survey responses breakdown

The survey was open to all leaseholders, private tenants and Chesterfield Borough Council tenants who receive the communal cleaning service. The charts below show a breakdown of respondents, and the length of time respondents have lived in their properties.

Are you a tenant or leaseholder?		
	No.	%
Chesterfield Borough Council tenant	125	83.9%
Leaseholder	17	11.4%
Private tenant of a leaseholder	7	4.7%



How long have you lived in your current property?							
Less than one year		One to two years		Two to five years		More than five years	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
7	4.9%	6	4.2%	20	14.0%	110	76.9%



For tenants and leaseholders who have lived in their property for less than one year, they will have limited knowledge of the previous cleaning service offered and could offer limited information regarding improvements of the service over the last 12 months, but they did provide useful information regarding the quality of the current service delivered.

4. Satisfaction levels of respondents

We wanted to explore how satisfied / unsatisfied people were with the revised communal cleaning service which is provided.

How satisfied are you with the communal cleaning which is currently provided?									
Very satisfied		Satisfied		Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied		Slightly unsatisfied		Very unsatisfied	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
40	27.0%	58	39.2%	20	13.5%	13	8.8%	17	11.5%

As the table above shows a total of 98 respondents felt a level of satisfaction with the communal cleaning service whereas 30 respondents indicated they felt a level of dissatisfaction with the service provided. On analysis of the free text responses given, a significant level of dissatisfaction links to the cleaning of windows and bin stores.

Looking at the data from the 2023 survey results satisfaction levels have increased with 27% of people reporting being very satisfied in 2024 up from 20.5% in 2023 and 39.2% reporting being satisfied in 2024 up from 26.9% in 2023. Whilst this is positive, we will continue to look at further options to increase satisfaction of tenants and leaseholders.

How satisfied are you with the communal cleaning which is currently provided? Comparison data from 2023 and 2024										
Year	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied		Slightly unsatisfied		Very unsatisfied	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2024	40	27.0%	58	39.2%	20	13.5%	13	8.8%	17	11.5%
2023	45	20.5%	59	26.9%	24	11.0%	37	16.9%	54	24.7%

5. Level of cleaning service received

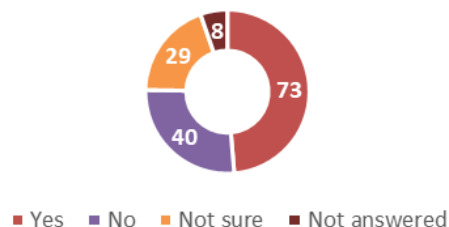
The communal cleaning service is contracted to deliver particular cleaning activities within blocks of flats. The details of this is available in the notice board of each block of flats and the cleaning team should sign and date the form so tenants and leaseholders can see what has been completed and when.

As part of the consultation, we asked tenants and leaseholders to indicate whether they felt they are receiving the level of service outlined in the contract.

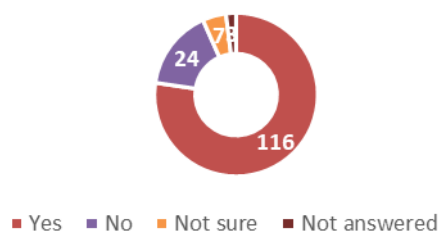
Do you feel you are receiving the level of service outlined in the service specification below?

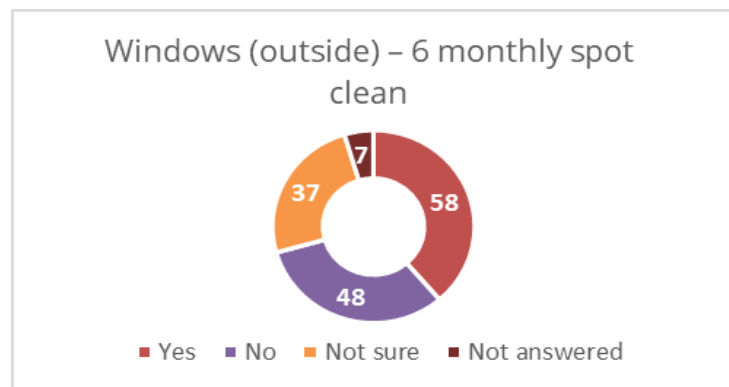
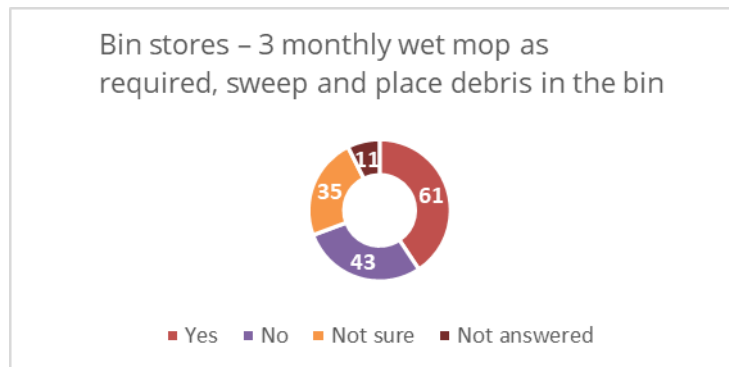
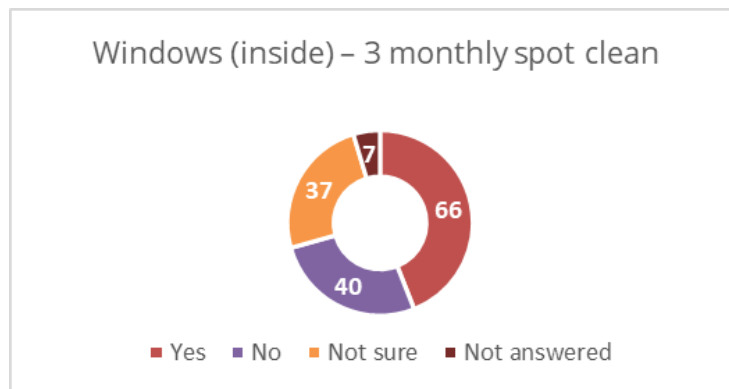
	Yes		No		Not sure	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Floor areas and stairs – weekly sweeping and mopping	116	78.9%	24	16.3%	7	4.8%
Windowsills, walls, handrails, meter cupboard doors, entrance doors – weekly spot clean	73	51.4%	40	28.2%	29	20.4%
Windows (inside) – 3 monthly spot clean	66	46.2%	40	28.0%	37	25.9%
Windows (outside) – 6 monthly spot clean	58	40.6%	48	33.6%	37	25.9%
Bin stores – 3 monthly wet mop as required, sweep and place debris in the bin	61	43.9%	43	30.9%	35	25.2%

Windowsills, walls, handrails, meter cupboard doors, entrance doors



Floor areas and stairs





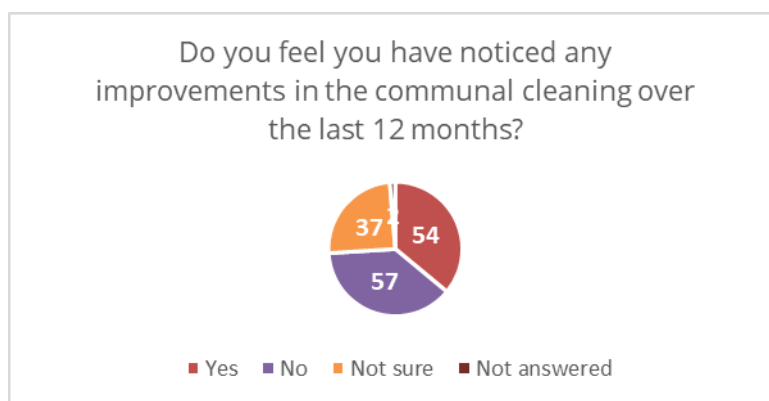
6. Improvements in the service level over previous 12 months

Following the initial consultation in 2023, based on tenant and leaseholder feedback a number of changes were made to the service delivery, including:

- review of the time spent in each block
- spot checks of the service
- quarterly meetings between housing management and the cleaning service management
- clarifying information on the cleaning specification
- changes to the colour of flooring used for refurbishments
- use of cleaning products with a fragrance.

Within this consultation It was important to see if tenants and leaseholders have noticed any improvements in the communal cleaning service, since the changes were implemented.

Do you feel you have noticed any improvements in the communal cleaning over the last 12 months?					
Yes		No		Not sure	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
54	36.5%	57	38.5%	37	25.0%



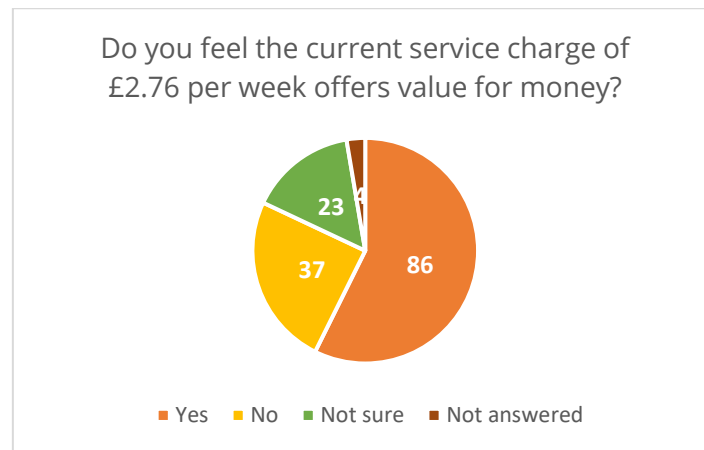
As shown above 54 respondents indicated that they felt there had been an improvement to the communal cleaning service, but 57 respondents stated they had not noticed any improvements. Analysis of the data shows that the main areas of concern for tenants and leaseholders are the window cleaning both internal and external and the bins store areas. This will be looked into further as part of the actions from this consultation.

7. Value for money

The communal cleaning service is paid for by tenants and leaseholders who receive the service.

As the communal cleaning service is something tenants and leaseholders pay for it was important to understand if respondents felt the current service charge offers value for money. Within the value for money question, respondents were able to leave additional comments to enable us to understand the quantitative responses submitted.

Do you feel the current service charge of £2.76 per week offers value for money?					
Yes		No		Not sure	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
86	58.9%	37	25.3%	23	15.8%



Almost 60% of respondents indicated they feel the current charge offers value for money, however 25% feel it does not.

Responses regarding the service offering value for money increased in 2024 to 58.9% compared to a figure of 49.6% when the initial consultation was completed in 2023.

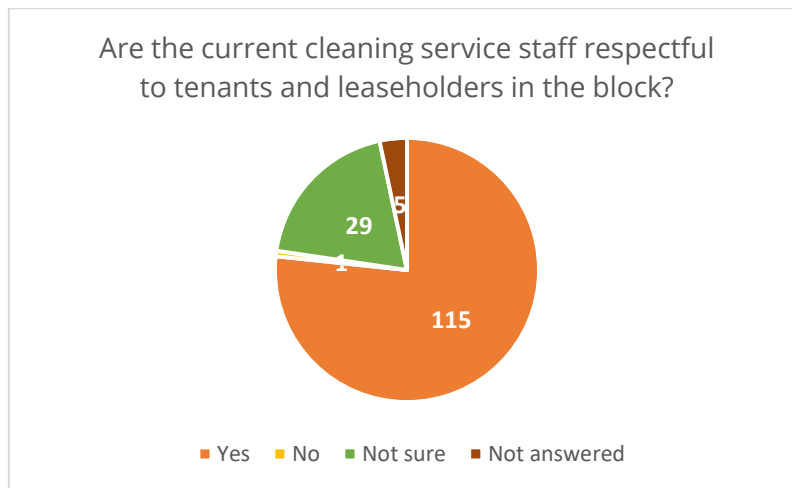
Do you feel the current service charge of £2.76 (2024) / £2.51(2023) per week offers value for money?						
Year	Yes		No		Not sure	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2024 (£2.76)	86	58.9%	37	25.3%	23	15.8%
2023 (£2.51)	111	49.6%	89	39.7%	24	10.7%

The qualitative responses given to this question were analysed to gain an understanding of the reasons respondents gave for feeling the service charge does or does not offer value for money, and further details of this can be found in the qualitative themes section of this report.

8. Customer service

The values of Chesterfield Borough Council include customer service and honesty and integrity, so it was important to understand whether respondents feel these values are demonstrated by the cleaning staff.

Are the current cleaning service staff respectful to tenants and leaseholders in the block?					
Yes		No		Not sure	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
115	79.3%	1	0.7%	29	20.0%



As the table above shows almost 80% of respondents felt the staff are respectful, additional comments received can be found within the overall survey results.

Are the current cleaning service staff respectful to tenants and leaseholders in the block?						
Year	Yes		No		Not sure	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2024	115	79.3%	1	0.7%	29	20.0%
2023	158	71.5%	13	5.9%	50	22.6%

When comparing the data from the initial survey 79.3 respondents felt staff were respectful to tenants and leaseholders compared to 71.5% when the initial consultation was completed in 2023.

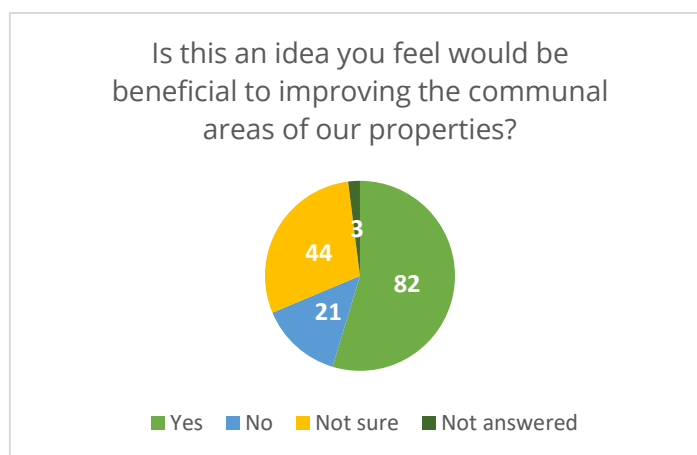
9. Community surveyors

As part of the tenant engagement programme, we currently offer opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to become community surveyors for the external housing areas. We hope to look at extending this role to include internal communal areas, and wanted to see if there was support for this proposal from respondents, so we can look to develop this further.

The table below shows overall respondents feel this is a positive idea and we will be working with those who have expressed an interest to develop this further.

Is this an idea you feel would be beneficial to improving the communal areas of our properties?

Yes		No		Not sure	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
82	55.8%	21	14.3%	44	29.9%



10. Summary of changes in satisfaction

The survey results indicate an upturn in satisfaction with the communal cleaning service. Overall satisfaction rose by almost 20% from 47.4% to 66.2% and dissatisfaction fell from 41.6% to 20.3%. This increase in satisfaction is reflected across all the questions in the survey (summary in appendices 2). This increase is a welcome improvement though there is still work to do to increase satisfaction further. The respondents are still not certain that they are receiving the full cleaning specification with window cleaning being the main area where checks and updating residents may be required.

11. Qualitative findings

Within the communal cleaning consultation, respondents were asked several questions where they could add additional information and comments to assist our understanding of their responses. This information helps identify the priority areas for respondents and the list of qualitative responses given can be found in the overall survey results (available as appendices 3)

Key themes from respondents can be categorised as follows:

- Sweeping and mopping is being completed
- Use of fragranced cleaning products has made areas smell fresher
- Cleaning staff being respectful
- Bin stores not being cleaned
- Windows internal and external not being cleaned frequently enough
- Handrails not being cleaned thoroughly and appearing 'sticky'
- Cleaning staff not being 'visible' to tenants and leaseholders

Within the responses given there appears to be a pattern of some tenants and leaseholders being very happy with the service and others being unhappy with the service. This is something which requires more analysis to understand why there is a disparity between levels of satisfaction.

All the comments received have been shared with the cleaning service, the housing management service and the service director for housing. This enables us to understand in depth what the areas of priority are for tenants and leaseholders.

12. Next Steps

From a tenant and leaseholder engagement perspective, we will be arranging a session for respondents to come and hear the results from the consultation and be commencing work with tenants, leaseholders and the housing management service to develop the role of community surveyors within our internal communal areas.

The housing management service will continue to meet regularly with the cleaning service and continue to monitor the service delivery for the communal cleaning contract. The feedback received via the survey completed by tenants and leaseholders will also be considered as part of the annual review completed by the housing service director.

13. Thanks

The housing service would like to thank all tenants and leaseholders who gave up their time to share their views as part of this consultation.

If you would be interested in finding out more about current tenant and leaseholder engagement opportunities, please contact:

Email: tenantengagement@chesterfield.gov.uk

Phone: 01246 345147

Website: <https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/housing/information-for-tenants-and-leaseholders/get-involved/>