



Milton Keynes  
City Council



# Repairs and Maintenance Consultation.

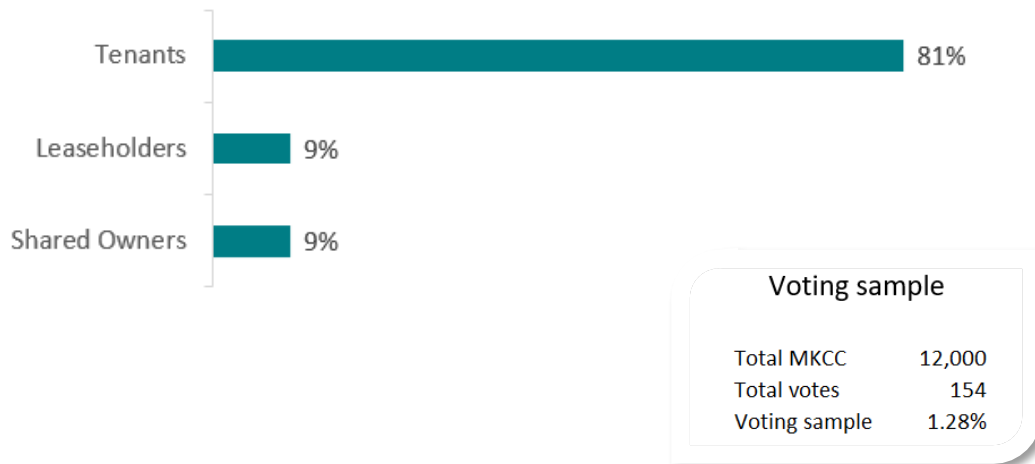
Consultation Analysis

16 Feb – 25 Mar 2024



5 April 2024  
Version 1

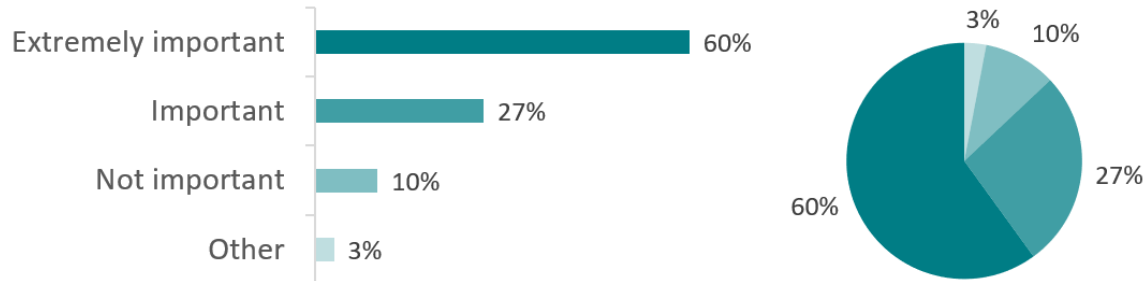
## QUESTION 1. What is your tenancy type?



1.28% voting sample is similar to our previous consultations on rents and service charges. In terms of tenancy type, the sample is mostly representative of our total stock, with small overpopulation of tenants over leaseholders and shared owners who don't benefit from the service to the same degree as tenants.

Please note, all questions in the survey were not mandatory which is why the number of responses to each question may vary.

**QUESTION 2. We take around 5,500 calls a month. How important is it to you to be able to ring up versus online? - 148 Responses.**

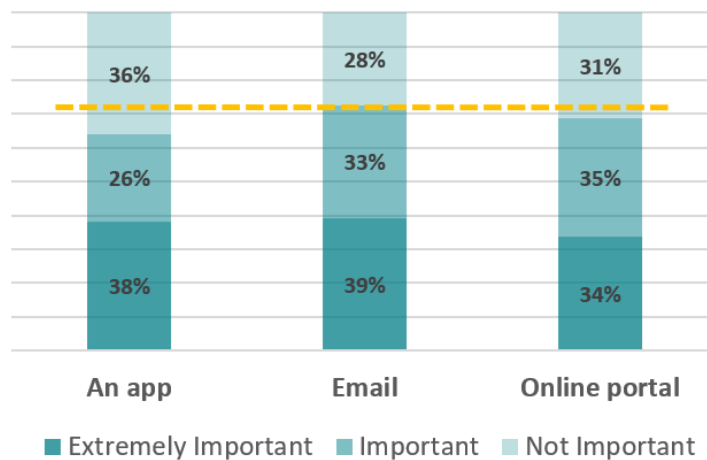


**Correlation Analysis Between Tenant Type and Responses:** The importance of human interaction is a universally strong preference, influenced by the nature of the services discussed (repairs and service issues). The 'Other' comments lean towards a positive sentiment when it comes to human interaction as well as the benefit of communications.

**Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. What specific factors contribute to residents' rating the ability to ring up as "Extremely important"?
2. Is the preference for human interaction in the responses also an indication that online methods are less effective, what could be the reason for that?
3. Are there certain issues or circumstances in which tenants, shared owners, and leaseholders would prefer online communication over phone calls, and what are those situations?

### QUESTION 3. How important is reporting repairs through the following ways? - 149 Responses.



#### Correlation Analysis Between Tenancy Type and Responses:

- **Reporting Through an App:** This method of contact shows mixed preferences among residents, with an equal number considering it 'Extremely Important' and 'Not Important.' Shared owners mostly find it 'Extremely Important,' while leaseholders primarily consider it 'Important.'
- **Reporting Through Email:** This is the most preferred method across all tenancy types.
- **Reporting Through Online Portal:** Tenants show an even spread of preferences for this method, with a slight lean towards 'Extremely Important.' Both shared owners and leaseholders find it 'Important,' and shared owners 'Extremely Important.'

In summary, whilst email is the most preferred method of contact, there is a variation within each tenancy type. This may suggest a one-size-fits-all approach may not be the most effective, and we should consider individual preferences when deciding on contact methods. It is also worth noting that these preferences could change over time, or with the introduction of innovative technologies, so regular surveys could be beneficial.

#### Top Three Questions Arising:

1. Overall, across all tenancies, residents chosen Email as the most important contact method. Does it suggest we do not currently use other methods effectively? Why?
2. What specific aspects or features of reporting methods make them "Extremely Important" or "Important" to the customers?
3. How can we address the needs of customers who view certain reporting methods as "Not Important"?

**QUESTION 4. Around 4,500 repairs are done each month. Over 99% happen within our emergency (4 hours) and routine (28 days) repair timeframes. Would you make any changes to the repair timeframes? - 148 Responses; Comments of those who responded 'No' - 67 Responses.**



#### **The Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Comments:**

1. Repairs should be completed quicker than 28 days, especially for non-emergencies that still require timely intervention - **15 mentions**.
2. Emergency repairs should be attended to faster than within 4 hours, or a new category should be made - **5 mentions**.
3. Repair appointments should be more accommodating of tenants' schedules, and they should get more precise timing - **4 mentions**.
4. We should introduce new timeframe, such as 7 days, 14 days, or 2 weeks, for urgent but not emergency repairs - **7 mentions**.
5. We should complete repairs in one visit - **2 mentions**.

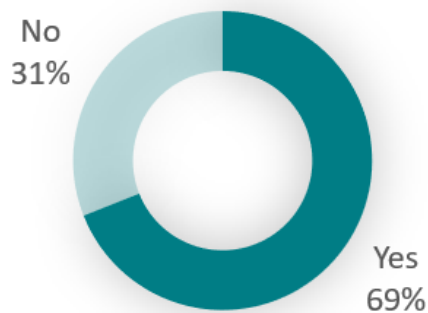
**Overview of Preferences:** There is a preference for shorter repair timeframes than currently provided. There is an inclination towards introducing a mid-range repair timeframe for urgent, but not emergency, repairs. There is also a concern about the efficiency of the repair process and the accommodation of tenants' schedules. Residents are expressing urgency related to emergencies or vulnerable individuals.

#### **Top Three Questions Emerging:**

1. Should we introduce a new repair timeframe category, such as 7 or 14 days, for urgent, non-emergency repairs?
2. How can repair processes be optimized to minimise the need for multiple visits and better accommodate tenant schedules?
3. What are the specific concerns or repair types that lead tenants to seek faster responses outside of the emergency classification?



**QUESTION 5. We check how well things are going using measures such as how quickly a repair is done, how quickly we answer the phone, and how many repairs are completed first time. Are these the right measures? - 148 Responses; Comments of those who responded 'No' - 43 Responses.**



**The Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Comments:**

1. **Quality of Repairs:** Responses mention quality, thoroughness, or longevity of repairs. Other mentions related to multiple visits for the same repair and suggest a quality concern.
2. **Feedback/Follow-Up System:** Responses suggest implementing follow-up calls, satisfaction surveys, or any feedback mechanism post-repair.
3. **Efficiency and Repeat Visits:** Responses cite issues with having multiple visits to complete a single repair, or jobs that we do not do efficiently.
4. **Communication Issues:** Responses highlight communication flaws before, during, and after repairs.
5. **Urgency:** The need for faster action on emergency repairs, or more urgent attention to issues that we do not classify as emergencies but are also urgent.

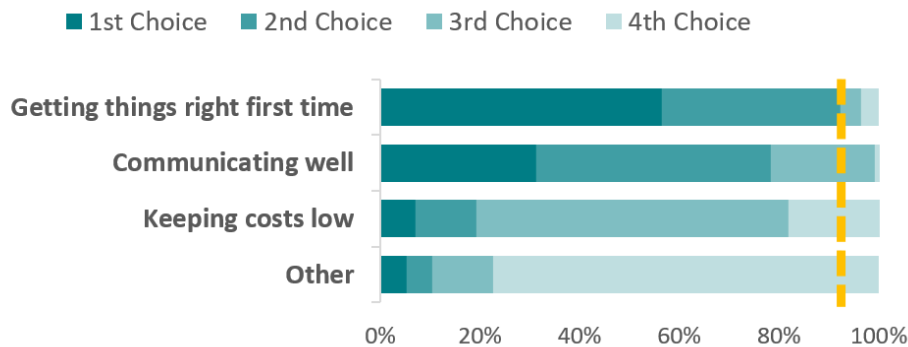
**Overview of Preferences:** The respondents would like to see improvements in the quality and effectiveness of repairs, with fewer repeat visits required. They also wish to see better communication and post-repair follow-up. Residents also highlighted the urgency in handling repairs and the efficiency of the repair process as areas for improvement.

**Trend Analysis:** There is a clear trend emphasising the importance of repair quality and customer satisfaction post-repair. Timeline is important, but not at the expense of doing the job right. There's an underlying suggestion for the introduction of additional measures that focus on quality control and ensuring that issues are fixed correctly on the first visit.

### **Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we improve the existing repair process to reduce the number of repeat visits and increase the completion rate of successful repairs on the first appointment?
2. What additional measures can be implemented to capture customer satisfaction more accurately after repairs have been completed?
3. Is there a need to prioritise repairs based on the urgency of the situation, and how can we improve communication around the scheduling and execution of repairs?

**QUESTION 6. Which bit of how we do repairs matters the most to you? - 115 Responses; Comments of those who responded 'Other' - 54 Responses.**



**Correlation Analysis Between Tenancy Type and Responses:**

The trend among all responses highlights a strong preference for "Getting things right first time," showing that respondents value the effectiveness of repairs most highly. Communication and keeping costs low also seem to be important, but secondary to the quality of repair work. Comments also indicate a desire for improvement in several areas beyond the immediate repairs, including quality, communication, and scheduling.

**The Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Other Comments:**

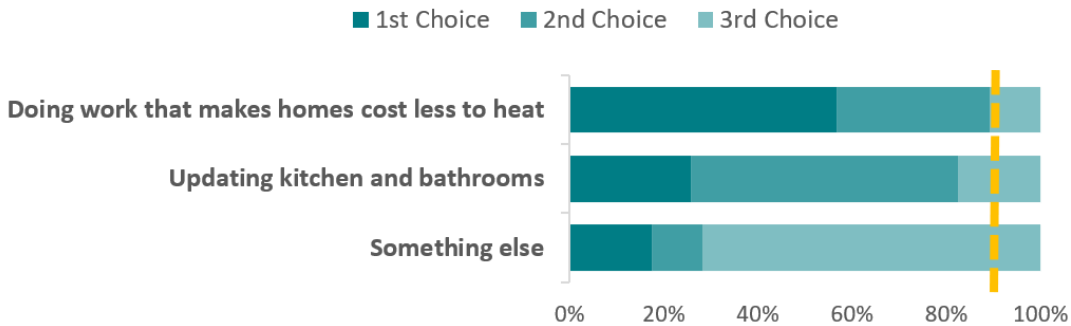
1. Quality of work/repairs - **4 mentions**
2. Support for shared owners regarding repairs - **3 mentions**
3. Better appointment times/flexibility for working people - **3 mentions**
4. Efficiency of completing repairs or dealing with repair issues - **2 mentions**
5. Communication and follow-up after repairs - **2 mentions**

**Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we improve communication between repair service and tenants to ensure better satisfaction with repair schedules, especially for working tenants?
2. What steps can we take to enhance the quality of repair work, and how can this quality be consistently maintained and inspected?
3. How can the service provided to shared owners be improved to ensure they feel supported and that their repair needs are adequately addressed?



**QUESTION 7. To manage our spend on homes within our budget we make decisions about priorities. What improvements are a priority for you? - 120 Responses; Comments of those who responded ‘Something else’ - 70 Responses.**



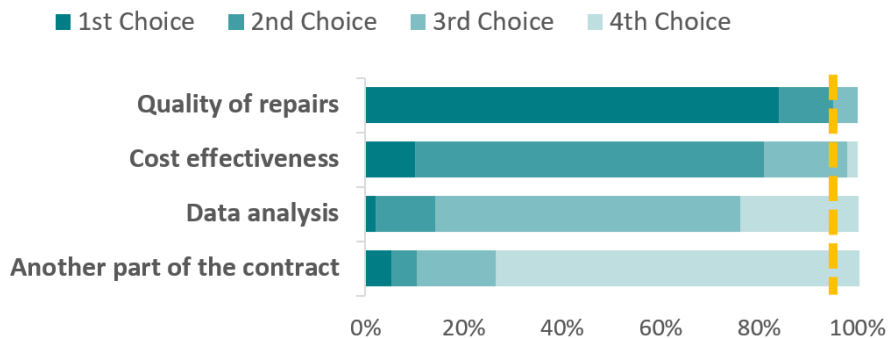
**General Sentiment for the Open Question:** Shared owners and leaseholders have shown some interest in "Something Else," indicating that they might have specific needs or concerns not covered by the predefined improvement options. This could be due to the different nature of shared ownership and leasehold compared to standard tenancies, involving differing responsibilities for property maintenance and improvements.

- "Something else" covers a range of responses, including specific repairs like roof and guttering maintenance, and items related to disabilities. Residents often ranked it as either the 2nd or 3rd priority.
- Specific concerns such as "quality of work," "roof repairs", "insulation linked to disability," and "garden flooding" highlight individual needs that could inform future priorities for maintenance and improvement beyond the standard options provided.

**Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we prioritise and implement investment in cost-effective heating measures to address the concerns of the majority of respondents?
2. Given the varied responses for "Something else," how can we get better at assessing and incorporating into maintenance planning individual and specific tenant needs?
3. How can we manage updates to kitchens and bathrooms in conjunction with cost-saving measures to efficiently address the second most common concern among respondents?

**QUESTION 8. Which part of the contract do you think is the most important for the council to monitor? - 133 Responses; Comments of those who responded ‘Another part of contract’ - 56 Responses.**



**The Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Things to be monitored:**

1. **Quality of Repairs:**
  - "That job is done correctly"
  - "Updating old buildings which have a lot of internal issues"
  - "The correct person for the particular repair not all workers can multitask"
  - "Contractor is doing a quality works and not just a rush job"
2. **Contractor Skills and Respectful Behaviour:**
  - "That contractors turn up on time, respect the Tenant and not treat us like idiots"
3. **Communication and Appointment Organization:**
  - "Ensuring an efficient work force, minimising visits & phone calls"
  - Improved communication, contractor timing, respect, and multitasking.
4. **Specific Repairs / Maintenance Needs:**
  - "Roof and guttering maintenance"
  - "Response time"
  - "Repair linked to disability"
5. **Planning of Routine Maintenance and Insulation to Prevent Mold:**
  - "Insulation inside needs to be upgraded"
  - Concerns about insulation, guttering, and mould.

**Overview of Preferences Based on the Top 5 Comments:** Respondents' preferences indicate a strong desire to monitor things related to high-quality repair work and the importance of specific types of repairs that impact their quality of life or safety concerns. Emphasised is the appropriate behaviour and skill level of contractors, along with the need for respect and expertise in all interactions. Planning, communication, and follow-up are

seen by residents as areas requiring improvement, with suggestions for proactive and preventative maintenance strategies. This may also reflect a wish for individual requirements, such as disability-related modifications, to be considered. The expressed needs also emphasise a broader approach to understanding tenant priorities and adapting services to match those needs.

**Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we improve contractor selection, training, and oversight to ensure high-quality repairs are consistently delivered?
2. What mechanisms can be implemented or improved to monitor communication and scheduling between tenants and repair service providers?
3. Given the importance of cost-effectiveness, how can we balance this with achieving high-quality repairs, and what strategies we can employ to proactively address maintenance that contributes to long-term cost savings, and how should we monitor it?

## **QUESTION 9. What are the top three things that would improve the service you get from the person doing the repair? - 123 Responses.**

### **The Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Comments:**

1. **Quality of repairs/Good job:** Including variations such as "qualified," "capable," "high quality," "correct person trained in service," "ensure job is completed fully" - **31 mentions**
2. **Timing/Punctuality:** Including timing of work, turning up on time, time management - **16 mentions**
3. **Effective Communication:** Including being able to communicate effectively, communication skills, providing explanations - **15 mentions**
4. **Professionalism/Worker behaviour:** Including friendly, professional, caring, respect, showing shoe covers - **13 mentions**
5. **Specific Repair Needs:** Specialized or emergency repairs, including roof and guttering maintenance, emergency call outs, repairs linked to disabilities - **6 mentions**

**Trend Analysis:** There is a strong trend among respondents towards valuing repair quality and timing above other factors. Communication and professionalism are also crucial but stem from satisfaction with the primary concern – the quality and efficiency of the repairs.

### **Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we improve the quality of work to meet tenant expectations for repairs done right the first time?
2. In what ways we can ensure that repair personnel are punctual and have respect for the tenants' time.
3. What communication strategies we can implement to improve clarity and effectiveness in interaction between us and tenants.

## **QUESTION 10. What are the top three things that would improve the service you get from the contact centre? - 106 Responses.**

**Correlation Analysis Between Tenant Type and Responses:** Customers tend to prioritise responsiveness and professionalism from the contact centre staff, suggesting that timeliness and quality of interaction directly affect customer satisfaction. Tenants and Shared Owners occasionally mention specific services (e.g., Shared Owners needing more help), indicating different expectations based on customer type. Convenience and modernisation (e.g., online services) are important to many of the responding customers.

### **The Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Comments:**

1. **Quick Phone Response/Reduce Call Wait Times:** Example comments: "answer the phone quick", "Having short calling queue", "Prompt answer of phone" -**18 mentions.**
2. **Quality of Customer Service/Professional Staff:** Comments: "Politeness", "Professionalism", "Friendly manner" - **17 mentions.**
3. **Effective Communication:** Comments: "Communication is the most important to me", "Listening", "Good communication" - **16 mentions**
4. **Timeliness and Efficiency of Repair Work:** Comments: "Getting Job done on time", "quicker response time", "problem to a competent person/team" – **14 mentions**
5. **Online and Mobile Services/Booking Appointments:** Comments: "Book repairs online", "All services to be online or through an app", "messaging to leave a reminder of day/time of repair" - **9 mentions**

**Overview of Preferences Based on Top 5 Comments:** The respondents are primarily concerned with reducing wait times on calls to the contact centre. They are looking for professional and polite customer service, expecting staff to communicate effectively. Many are in favour of online and mobile services for scheduling repairs and wish to see timely and efficient handling of repair work.

### **Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can the contact centre improve phone response times and reduce customer wait times?
2. What steps can we take to improve the professionalism and communication skills of the contact centre staff?
3. What are the benefits of enhancing online services and introducing a mobile app for service scheduling and reminders?

**QUESTION 11. If a contractor did not complete a job, how would you like it dealt with? - 140 Responses. Who would you want to raise the issue with if the person doing the work cannot solve the problem? - 129 Responses.**



**Correlation Analysis Between Customer Type and Responses:** Tenants prefer direct engagement with the contractors to resolve the issues while there are also significant mentions of higher authorities like the council. This may suggest that tenants prefer to have a more immediate and pragmatic approach to problem-solving, while also holding the council accountable for follow-ups and ensuring quality service.

**Top 5 Most Frequently Mentioned Comments for Open Question:**

1. Reference to council handling the situation directly – **21 mentions**
2. Desire for management or a supervisor to be involved - **19 mentions**
3. Mention of specific involvement of the contact centre - **10 mentions**
4. Mention of dealing with the contract company or contractor directly - **8 mentions**
5. Reference to using an online platform or app - **4 mentions**

**Overview of Preferences Based on Top 5 Comments:** Respondents have a strong preference for accountability and want to ensure that we take their issues seriously. They frequently refer to authorities such as the council to handle the situation, which may indicate a lack of confidence in the lower levels of the service chain. The preference for management to be involved suggests a desire for authority figures who can make executive decisions. Often mentioning the contact centre shows that respondents see it as an essential part of the feedback loop, though not necessarily as the first point of action.



**Trend Analysis:** A trend emerges where customers have emphasised the importance of follow-ups and direct communication with the person doing the work or the supervising entity. They want the opportunity to have a say in rescheduling and to ensure we can resolve their issue in a manner that respects their time and home.

**Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we ensure that the contractors communicate effectively with tenants when they do not complete the job?
2. What measures can we take to increase accountability within the contact centre and among council supervisors when issues arise?
3. Is there a way to use online tools or apps to streamline the process of rescheduling incomplete jobs and escalating unsolved issues?

## **QUESTION 12. Provide an example of how MKCC can better manage repairs and maintenance responsibilities? - 114 Responses.**

**Correlation Analysis Between Tenancy Type and Responses:** Many tenants and leaseholders are dissatisfied due to perceived inefficiencies, lack of proper oversight, and potential quality concerns regarding the work done by contractors or handled by the council. Responses typically indicate a frustration with current processes and suggest there should be increased responsibility in the management and oversight of repair work.

### **Themes for Improvements:**

1. Communication and updates from Mears or council - **10 mentions**
2. Getting work done right/competency of contractors - **5 mentions**
3. Property surveys and audits - **4 mentions**
4. Consultation and involving tenants - **4 mentions**
5. Speed and standard of completed work - **4 mentions**
6. Miscellaneous suggestions (cultural change, better inspections, etc.) - **4 mentions**
7. Checking work quality - **3 mentions**
8. Monitoring work, especially for big jobs - **2 mentions**
9. Emergency response interrogation and efficiency - **2 mentions**
10. Rewards for tenants and punishments for abusers - **1 mention**
11. Proactive measures - **1 mention**

**Trend Analysis:** The majority of responses indicate a desire for more effective oversight and proactive management of maintenance responsibilities. There is a common appeal for the council to be more engaged, thorough in inspections, and responsive to the state of the properties. Repeated mentions of ensuring effective communication and competent contractors reveal tenants' expectations for accountability and quality.

### **Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we implement more effective communication strategies with tenants regarding repair updates and contractor oversight?
2. What policies or standards can be set to ensure that we complete repair work to a high standard and that contractors are competent?
3. How can we improve emergency repair response times and overall efficiency to prevent unnecessary costs and delays?

## **QUESTION 13. Any other comments - 65 Responses.**

**Correlation Analysis Between Tenancy Type and Responses:** The responses suggest a clear dissatisfaction among tenants with the way we currently handle repairs and maintenance service, with less specific feedback from leaseholders and shared owners. Common across tenancy types is the desire for improved communication and quality in maintenance work.

### **Key Themes Identified:**

1. **Repair Timing and Booking:** Suggestions for accepting repair booking during holidays or within specific timeframes when tenants are available.
2. **Inclusion in Services:** Shared Owners want to be included in/covered by repairs and maintenance service.
3. **Accountability:** Calls for us to be accountable for repairs, work quality, and complaints follow-up.
4. **Contractor Service Quality:** Feedback focuses on the quality and competency of contractors and their workmanship.
5. **Communication:** Requests for better communication, updates on repairs, and transparency in service provision.
6. **Suggestions for Improvement:** Recommendations include fairer treatment of tenants, more efficient work completion, and dedicated oversight.
7. **Specific Service Requests:** Some responses mention requests for specific repairs or maintenance, such as lighting for security purposes, repairing damaged items, etc.

**Overview of Preferences Based on Top Comments:** Tenants and leaseholders are emphasising the need for better communication and quality in repair services. Many seem to be frustrated with the responsiveness and want a more tenant-friendly approach to repair scheduling. Shared owners are concerned about their inclusion in services and are suggesting a reshaping of policies to address their needs.

### **Trend Analysis:**

- A notable trend is the call for improved accountability from MKCC and the contractors they employ.
- Residents expect more effective communication and transparency about repair and maintenance work.
- There is a consistent desire from residents for us to do repairs to a higher standard and for services to accommodate the varied schedules of tenants.

### **Top Three Questions Arising:**

1. How can we enhance communication to ensure we keep tenants informed about the status of repairs and maintenance work?
2. What steps can we take improve satisfaction among Shared Owners?
3. How can we improve scheduling system to better accommodate the varying availabilities of tenants for repair work?

Overall, the survey responses indicate areas where our maintenance services can improve, particularly in terms of communication, quality assurance, and repair scheduling flexibility, as well as policy considerations for shared ownership scenarios.

