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12 November 2004

## **Tenants speak out**

Whitefriars customers are happier than ever, according to a new independent survey.

Anonymous city-wide research revealed that eight out of 10 Whitefriars tenants are satisfied with the service they receive from Coventry's largest housing group. This compares with seven out of 10 satisfied customers in 2001.

Other key revelations show that eight out of 10 people believe their rent offers good value for money and nine out of 10 think the not-for-profit landlord is very good at keeping them informed. Seven out of 10 people interviewed feel Whitefriars is dealing with repairs better than three years ago.

During July and August more than 2,000 Whitefriars tenants took part in a survey designed to discover how well the organisation is performing and what changes its tenants want to see.

The participants, who were selected at random, each received a personal visit from an interviewer, allowing them to answer the questions from the comfort of their living rooms.

Residents were asked for their views on Whitefriars repairs service HomeWorks, their access to services, customer care, how much influence they felt they had and also issues affecting their area such as anti-social behaviour.

John Russell, Willenhall Tenants and Residents' Association member and chair of the Voices of Whitefriars Residents Group, said the results were good news for customers.

The Chepstow Close resident said: "Surveys can be a pain as you are unlikely to find out the results and what is being done with the information. Thankfully we can now see that Whitefriars is not in the same game plan as most, as we now can see that improvements have come about since the last survey in 2001.

"Some of these improvements will take time and are ongoing like the Voices of Whitefriars Residents' Group and the 'Stardust' programs, but others like staff training have brought instant results in that all the staff are now wearing badges, and have become part of the Whitefriars team.

"Mistakes and errors happen in all lifestyles, but if they happen within Whitefriars do not moan; get on the phone or write and make things change. Let Whitefriars know at 'Voices' if you do not get a satisfactory answer or outcome, so it can monitor any problem areas. Call them on 024 7658 7087."

Despite the positive results Whitefriars is still looking to improve its services and build on its success. Thanks to customers' comments it is offering more home visits by housing officers, regular estate inspections and is developing a range of service improvements for its repairs service, HomeWorks.

Whitefriars Chief Executive Howard Farrand said the housing group would take action based on the results.

He said: "The results are really positive and it is fantastic people recognise an improvement. However, this doesn't mean we will be standing still - in fact it is quite the reverse. We will be examining the report in considerable detail and using the comments, complaints and compliments to improve our service.

"In 2001 tenants said they wanted to see our staff out on the estates more – following this we introduced a 'ranger' service and made changes to allow staff to spend more time on estates. This is just one of many examples that prove how much we value their comments.

“Thank you to all customers who took the time and trouble to complete the survey. We are listening.”

**Ends**

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