

## ANGUS COUNCIL

## COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 AUGUST 2016

## SUMMARY OF TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2016

**1. Introduction**

Central to the Scottish Social Housing Charter which became mandatory for all Scottish social landlords in the year 2013/14, are a range of satisfaction indicators which show how housing service customers view the services provided to them. In previous years, this information was collected by using a survey in the Housing newsletter, then by email and telephone, but neither of these methods produced the number of returns desired to give a good indication of customer views. For this reason, it was decided to contract with an external service provider, to ensure the data obtained was both valid and robust.

The survey results show an improving picture in almost all the measures, which is all the more remarkable given that we consistently have one of the lowest average rents in Scotland. We continue to deliver ever improving housing services, in co-operation with our tenants, while keeping any increases in charges to a minimum.

**2. Background**

Knowledge Partnership were the successful bidder in the QuickQuote procurement exercise to obtain customer satisfaction data primarily for the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC), but also to obtain more qualitative data to inform future planning. They used data provided from Northgate to put together a profile based on a number of variables including age, household composition, employment status and lettings area to ensure the sample was statistically valid. Letters were sent to the sample tenants giving an option to call a Freephone number if they did not wish to participate, and replacement tenants selected to replace any who did. One thousand face to face interviews were carried out to provide the results for the survey.

**3. Results**

Overall the survey results are very encouraging, and tenant satisfaction with the Housing Service is improving. The full survey report is available via the Council's information Hub, but the results are summarised below, taken from the Executive Summary of the report – **Appendix 1.**

The survey was carried out during March and April 2016. A total of 1,000 tenants were surveyed, representing 14% of all tenants. Tenants were interviewed in their homes by means of a face to face administered questionnaire.

Taking everything into account, 83% of tenants are very or fairly satisfied with the housing service provided. This figure represents a 5% improvement on the 2015 survey results and brings us into line with the 'all Council' Scottish average (84% satisfied).

In 2016, there are several aspects of our service which are shown to be performing more positively when measured in terms of tenant satisfaction and compared with 2015. These areas are:

- Housing quality, where 87% of tenants are satisfied with their home (69% in 2015)
- Value for money of rents (80% in 2016, compared with 74% in 2015)
- Re-let housing condition (84%, up from 81% in 2015)

- Neighbourhood management, which now stands at 82% satisfied compared to 70% in 2015. This result for 2016 brings Housing Services into line with the all Council average
- Keeping tenants informed, where satisfaction has increased very slightly from 76% in 2015 to 77% in 2016
- Opportunities for participating (64% satisfaction in 2016, compared to 62% in 2015).

Amongst the key variables measured by the 2016 survey, the service which has declined in terms of tenant satisfaction and is also furthest behind the all Council average is repairs. Eighty two percent (82%) of tenants were satisfied with this service in 2016, contrasted with 97% in 2015 and an average figure of 90%. Although these variances may be connected with the use of different data collection methods for repairs satisfaction, there is some qualitative feedback from tenants in the survey that the repairs service has room for improvement.

#### **4. Improvement areas**

Areas for investigation or possible further improvement are focused on the following:

- Whilst service level satisfaction has increased to 82% overall, single parent households, households with children, and tenants who live in tenements are much less likely to say that they are satisfied overall e.g. 75% of single parents are satisfied overall. These differences point to the challenge of satisfying tenants at different life stages or who take a 'non-standard' view based on their housing condition e.g. possible overcrowding, etc.
- At various stages of the survey, tenants who made suggestions for improving the Housing Service also made mention of the repairs service and specifically of the need to improve the responsiveness and speed of delivery of this service. In terms of statistics, more than one in ten tenants said that there could be issues with the speed of work completion, the time taken before work started and the overall quality of works. There were linked tenant comments on this theme referring to delays in repairs taking place and sometimes a lack of follow up in relation to repairs. Tenants who were in employment could sometimes be more affected by these issues than other groups.
- Although 87% of tenants said they were satisfied with their housing quality (which is in line with the all Council average), a substantial minority identified possible improvements to their home particularly in terms of the condition of windows, bathrooms and heating.
- In the Arbroath district specifically, satisfaction with re-let housing conditions (75%) is somewhat lower than the average for the all re-let tenants i.e. 84%, although it should also be noted that tenants living in the Arbroath district often rated their satisfaction lower on other measures when compared to other districts.
- Considering tenant participation, whilst Angus (64% of tenants satisfied) scores similarly to other Scottish local authorities on this measure, nearly a third of tenants have rated the participation question as 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' which we could interpret as a signal that tenants may not always be aware of what opportunities exist for them to participate in decision-making. When asked what participation methods they were aware of 18% of tenants indicated that they had knowledge of methods such as the Steering Group, Rent Setting Group etc. On the basis of this feedback there would appear opportunities to further engage with tenants in the work of participating.
- In relation to neighbourhood management, eight out of ten tenants were satisfied with the role played by the Housing Service in managing their local area. However, there are a number of issues that could require to be addressed under the heading 'neighbourhood improvements' which include: tackling drug use; addressing problem neighbours; tackling rubbish/litter and dog fouling; car parking (lack of) and matters of soft landscaping such as grass cutting.

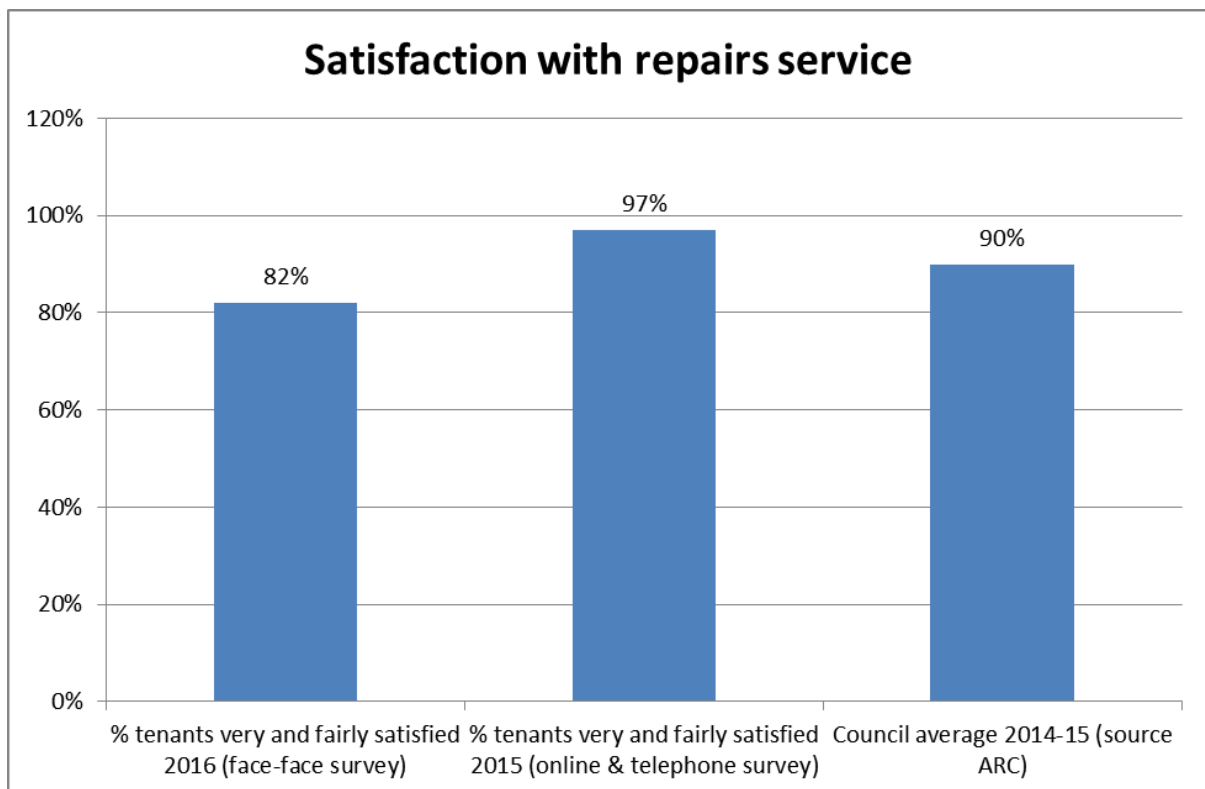
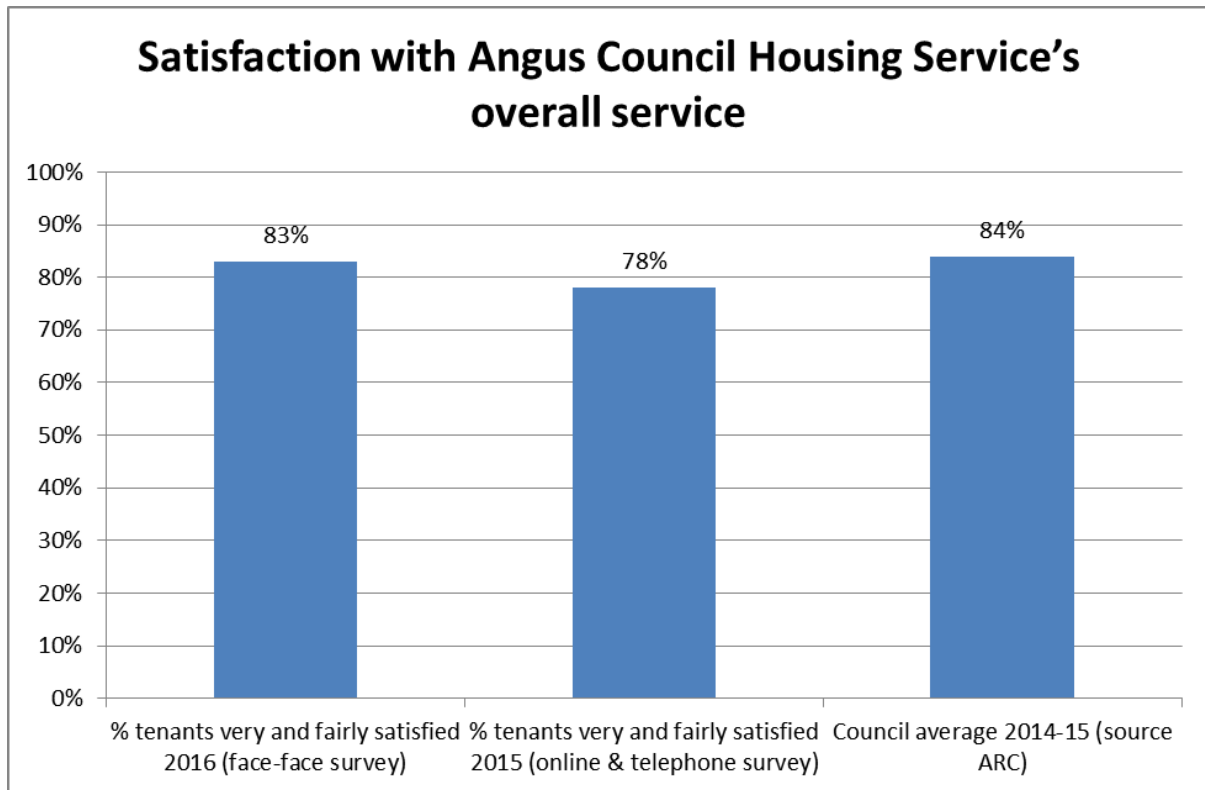
## 5. Conclusions

In general, the survey results describe a service which is delivering increasing customer satisfaction after having made great efforts to improve, and although there is work to be done in some areas, the trend is very much in the right direction. The scale of the survey should give us comfort in that it is of a sufficient size to ensure that tenants' views have been accurately and proportionately reflected. The results will be fed into our Housing Improvement Teams to ensure that areas where satisfaction is not so high can be addressed in our actions for the year ahead. Furthermore, the results will be shared with tenant scrutiny representatives to enable them to consider which areas they may wish to look at in the future. While we have already identified certain areas for actions to improve satisfaction, i.e. repairs, we recognise that other areas will also require action as we aspire to perform better than average across the range of indicators. Actions already identified are:

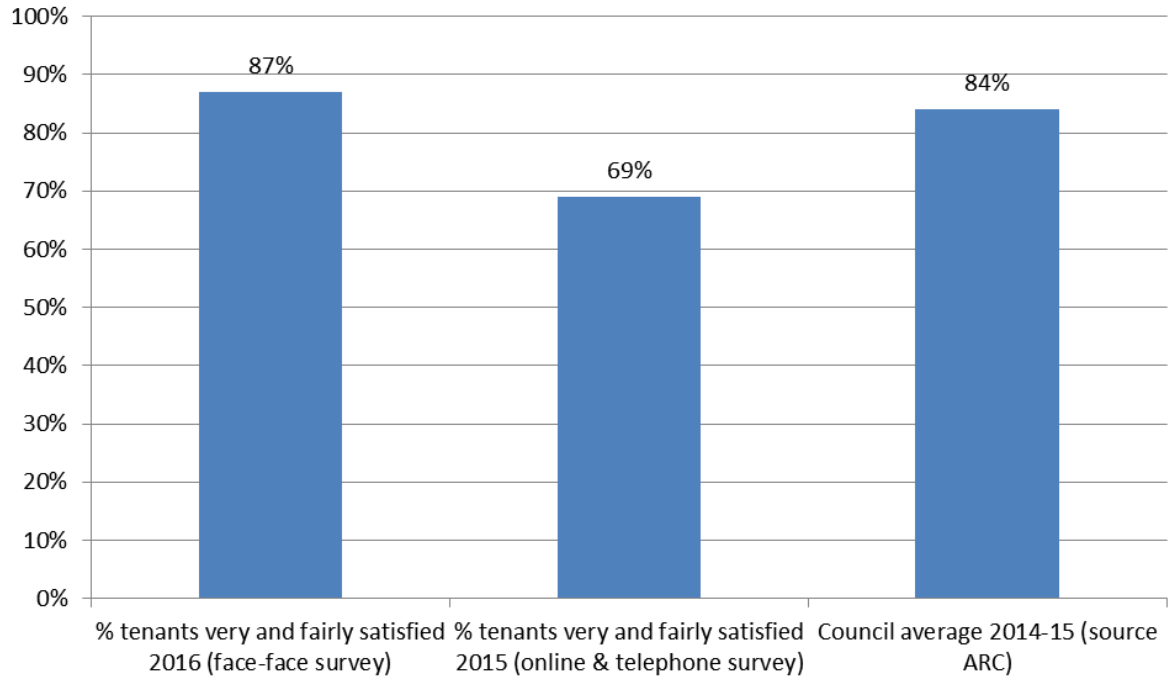
- Improve Aids and Adaptations performance.
- Take forward any recommendations made from the Scrutineers' review of repairs service.
- Continue to provide opportunities for tenants to move to new build properties
- Upgrade existing properties through the bathroom replacement programme
- Improve condition of relets through application of the relet standard
- Improve value for money for rents and service charges using survey data to inform what tenants view as important

## Appendix 1

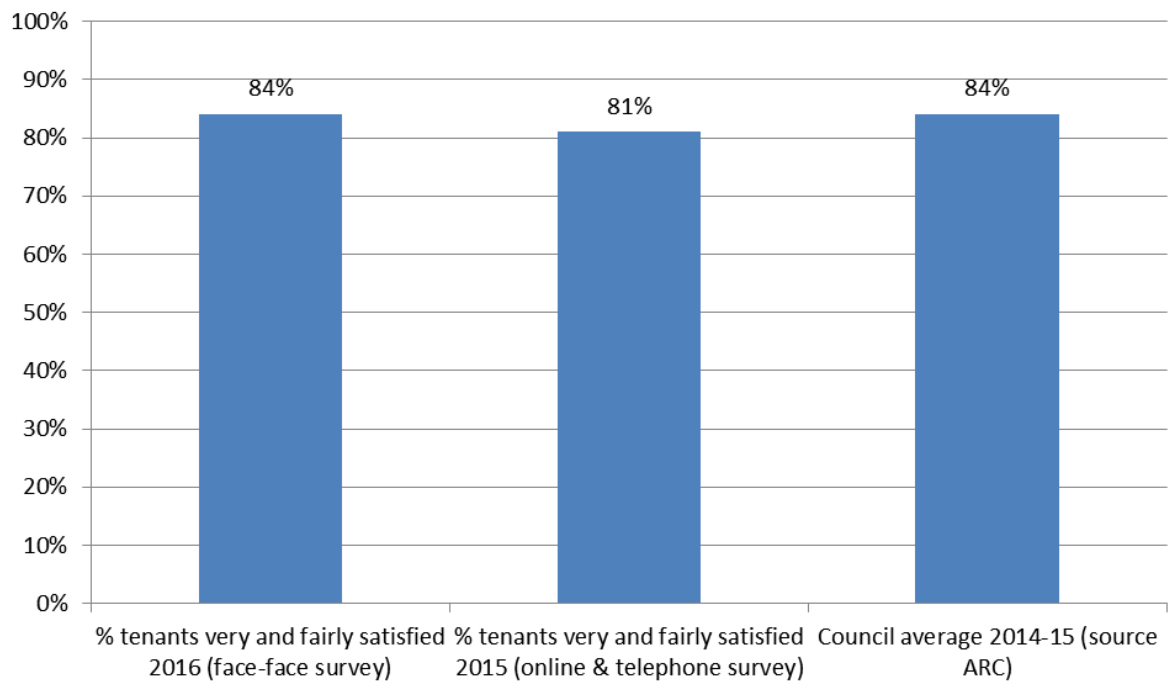
### Executive Summary - Data Charts



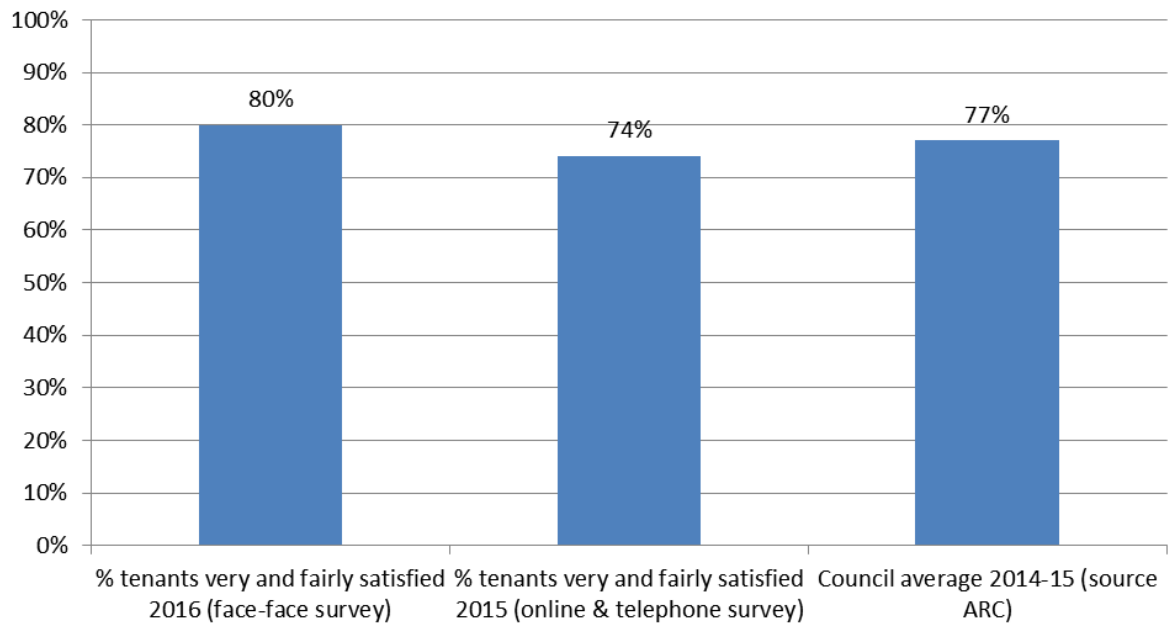
## Satisfaction with quality of home



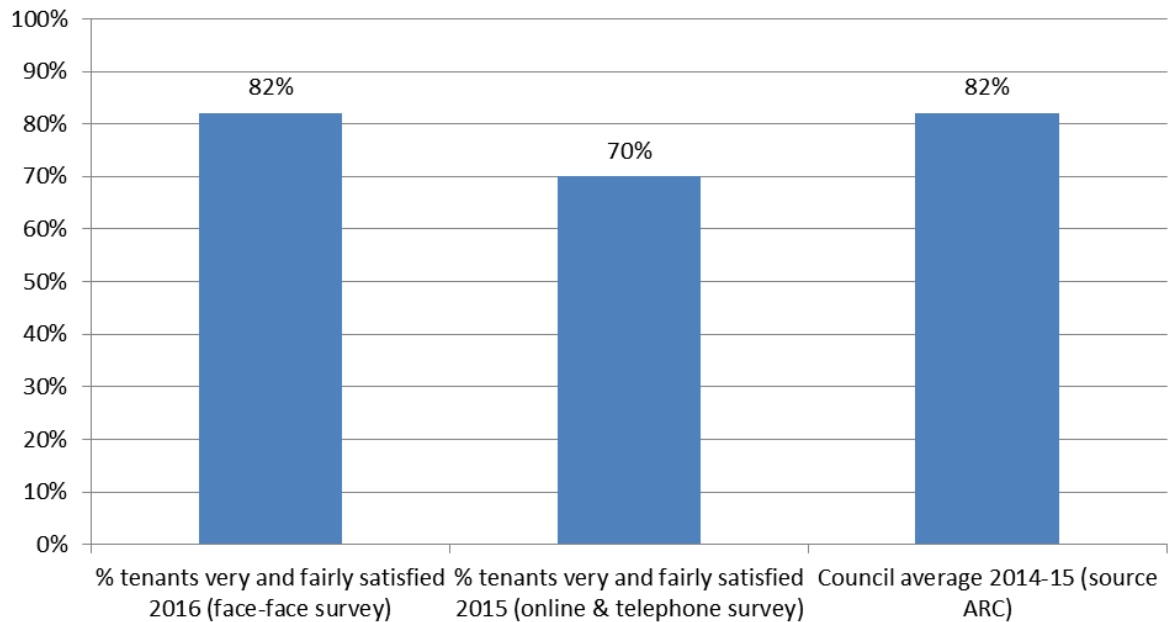
## Satisfaction with re-let standard of home



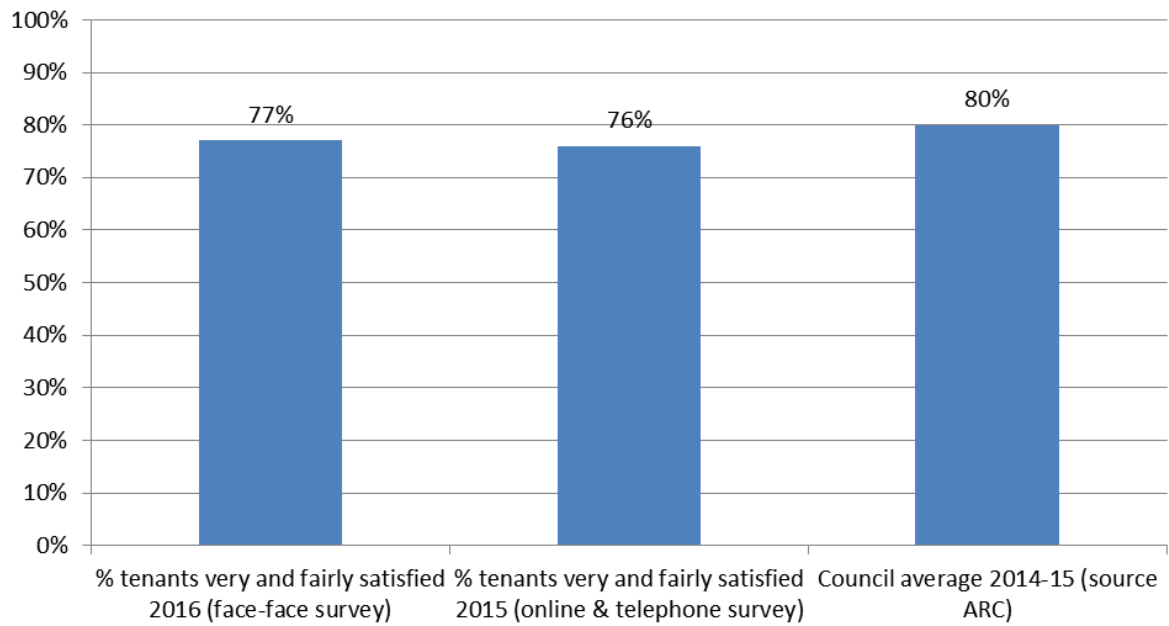
### Rating of rent as very good or fairly good value for money



### Satisfaction with management of neighbourhood by Angus Council Housing Service



## Satisfaction with being kept informed about services and decision



## Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making

