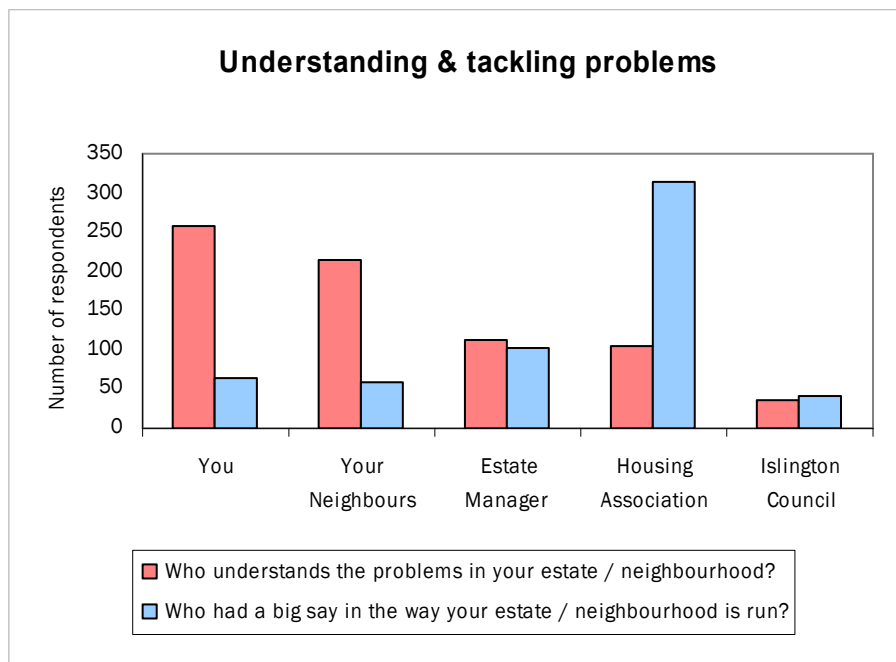


Factsheet from Emily Thornberry MP: Housing Association (Rights & Representation of Residents) Bill

First Reading 13 December 2006. Second Reading 2 March 2007.

Emily Thornberry carried out a survey in her constituency (Islington South & Finsbury) asking Housing Association tenants their views on how their landlord runs their estate or neighbourhood. Over 400 tenants replied.

The results of the survey show how tenants think that they and their neighbours understand the problems on their estate or neighbourhood best. But the results also show how residents think Housing Associations have far greater say than they do in the way their estate or neighbourhood is run.



That is why Emily Thornberry tabled the Housing Association Bill as a Private Member's Bill. This Bill proposes a new way for Housing Associations to work. Here's how things would work under the ideas in the Bill :

Residents would get a service agreement from their Housing Association. This agreement will pledge what service a Housing Association will provide for residents on their estate or in their neighbourhood. It will have to be agreed by residents, and it will be detailed (e.g. how often the rubbish must be collected, or how quickly repairs must be done).

If residents feel their Housing Association is not providing the service they agreed to, residents can trigger an inspection of their estate or neighbourhood. If the inspection finds problems with the way the estate or neighbourhood is being run, then the Housing Association will be given 6 months to improve.

The Housing Association would get help to improve—but if they don't improve, then residents will be asked if they want to press the 'nuclear button' and fire their Housing Association, taking up a new one instead.

This Bill would mean that Housing Associations would have to listen to local residents about what services they want—and if residents weren't listened to, they could do something about it.