### LANDLORD SURVEY

What We Heard...

In 2016, the City of St. John's in partnership with our Rental Team, launched an online Landlord Survey.

ST. J@HN'S



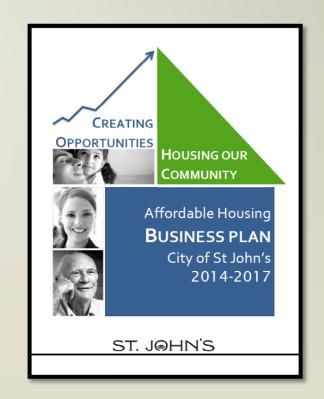
#### **OVER 300 LANDLORDS RESPOND TO OUR ONLINE SURVEY!!**



- The Landlord Survey was publicly launched on September 14 and ran until October 17, 2016.
- We had <u>over 300 respondents</u> and over 160 landlords have signed up for New Lease, our new electronic landlord newsletter.
- Survey respondents had to complete the survey and sign up for the newsletter to be entered for a \$500 gift card to a home improvement store of their choice.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUSINESS PLAN

- Working with our partners to create and maintain affordable rental homes is one of the priority areas in the City's Affordable Housing Business Plan (AHBP).
- The specific implementation strategy listed in the AHBP: Cultivate a
  Base of Landlords willing to rent to those seeking affordable housing
  (including those who may require supports).
- The City of St. John's coordinated the Landlord Survey in collaboration with the Rental Team (of the Affordable Housing Working Group).



#### **RENTAL TEAM**

Role:

To engage landlords, tenants, community and industry to address issues that impact the

quality, availability and affordability of rental housing in St. John's.

Organisation: Accountable to the City's Affordable Housing Working Group

Composition includes members from the following: City of St. John's, Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, Eastern Health, NAVNET, End Homelessness St. John's, Stella's Circle, Choices for Youth, CMHC - Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation, NLHC - Newfoundland & Labrador Housing Corporation, Canadian Mental Health Association, New Hope Community Centre, the Wiseman Centre, Empower - the Disability Resource Centre and the AIDS Committee NL



### FIRST MONTH - FREE RENT

for Grentell Court, Valleyview &

Sunridge Place

Due to the changing private market, with rising vacancy rates, we had landlords approaching us and looking to work with our partner agencies to help find tenants for their rental units.

709-738-3028

- There are many programs run by community agencies that rely on positive landlord relationships to ensure successful tenancies for the people they work with.
- End Homelessness St. John's is implementing new Housing First programs as well as more coordinated housing access for the City of St. John's.

Photo of the classified section of the Telegram, Fall 2016

Mark Law - 709-693-2882

Jorthorn Property

Corporation

Stavanger

John's, N.

### OUR LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT GOAL

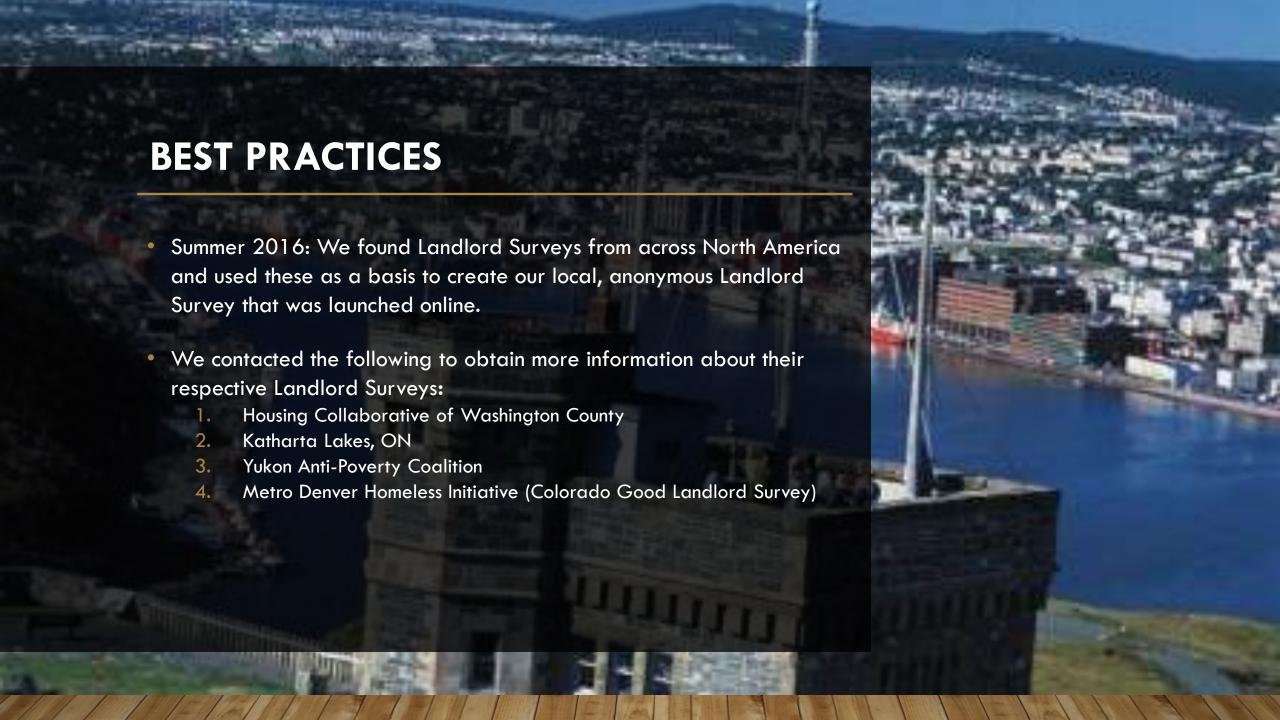
 To engage landlords in the promotion of successful tenancies which benefit people who need rental housing and those who provide that important service.





### WHY A LANDLORD SURVEY?

- We had planned to host a landlord breakfast in the fall of 2015 but had to cancel the event due to low numbers of landlords that had signed up.
- Upon cancelling the breakfast, we asked landlords if we could follow up with them. Most agreed and we had 5 meetings with individual landlords/property managers that fall.
- We still wanted to do more in this area and found landlord surveys online and thought this could work in our local context.

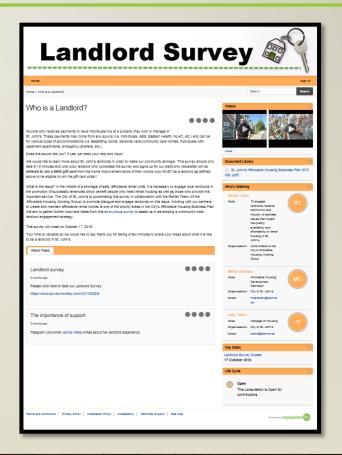


### LANDLORD SURVEY ENGAGE PAGE

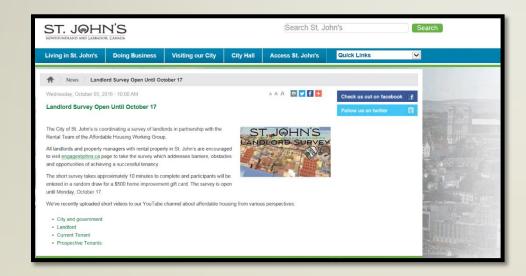
**September 2016:** We worked with the City's Engagement and Communications Departments on this project. We used Survey Monkey and launched the online Landlord Survey on the City's Engage Page. We also shared the link regularly on social media.

**Engage Page:** A Landlord Survey page was created on engagestjohns.ca and it was published once the survey went live.

http://engagestjohns.ca/landlord-survey



### **SURVEY PROMOTION & OUTREACH**



- a PSA was developed and an email was created that was forwarded via the Rental Team to the landlords that they work with.
- The support of the Rental Team was paramount in getting the survey link to local landlords and encouraging them to complete it.

### **LANDLORD VIDEOS**

- The City's Communication/ Engagement Departments and our partners worked together to create 4 videos to promote the Landlord Survey.
- We launched the following videos a few weeks after the Landlord Survey went "live":
  - 1. Deputy Mayor Perspective: <a href="https://youtu.be/sWPSN3C-fYk">https://youtu.be/sWPSN3C-fYk</a>
  - 2. Landlord Perspective: <a href="https://youtu.be/ReiFyqA0JV4">https://youtu.be/ReiFyqA0JV4</a>
  - 3. Prospective Tenants: <a href="https://youtu.be/0ADj31ctZo0">https://youtu.be/0ADj31ctZo0</a>
  - 4. Current Tenant: <a href="https://youtu.be/ZleY6aum9eE">https://youtu.be/ZleY6aum9eE</a>



### **POST LANDLORD SURVEY**

- Data Analysis: Due to the number of survey respondents, we approached the NL Statistics Agency and they assisted with the qualitative data analysis.
- The first New Lease landlord newsletter was distributed in early November and included the event invitation for the City's Landlord Engagement Affordable Housing Forum – that took place on National Housing Day, November 22, 2016.

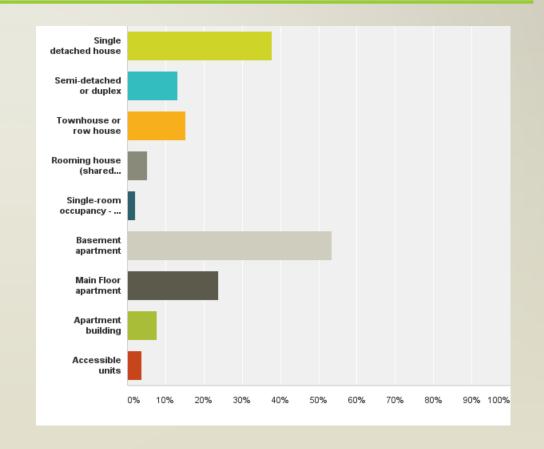


### Q1: WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOU? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

Answer Choices	Responses
Property Owner/Landlord	<b>95.31</b> % 305
Property Manager	<b>8.44</b> % 27
Total Respondents: 320	

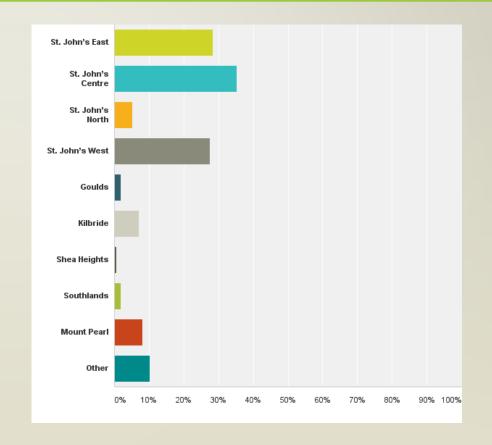
## Q2: WHAT KIND OF RENTAL PROPERTIES DO YOU HAVE? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

- Basement apartment 53.44 %
- Single detached house 37.81%
- Main floor apartment 23.75



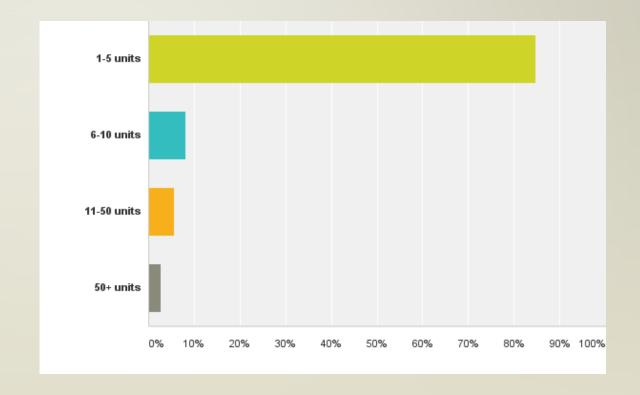
### Q3: IN WHAT AREA(S) DO YOU CURRENTLY OWN OR MANAGE RENTAL PROPERTIES? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

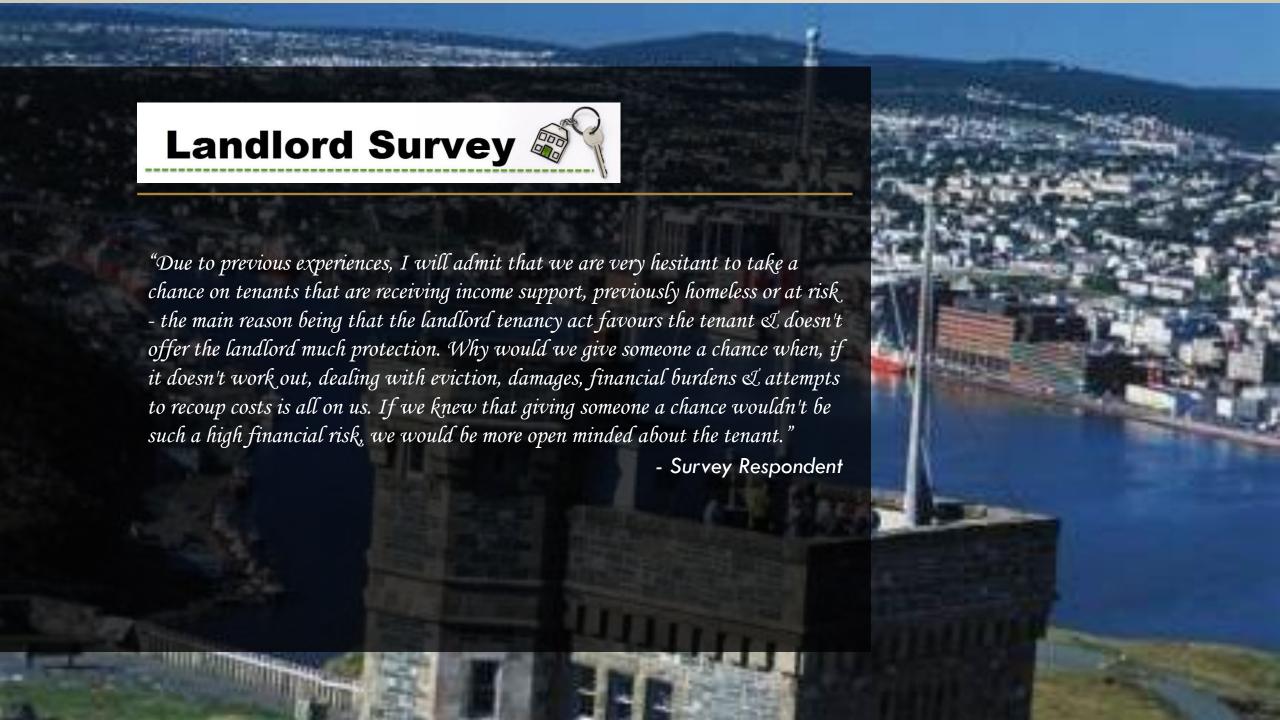
- St. John's Centre 35.31% (113)
- St. John's West 27.5% (88)
- St. John's East 28.44% (91)



# **PROPERTIES** (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY) NOTE: RENTAL PROPERTY INCLUDES BASEMENT APARTMENT AND ALL ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR RENT.

- 1-5 units 84.69% (271)
- 6-10 units 8.13% (26)
- 11-50 units 5.63% (18)
- 50+ units 2.81% (9)





#### Q5: PLEASE DESCRIBE THE AVERAGE RENT WITHOUT UTILITIES:

	Bachelor	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 + Bed	Total Respondents
under \$600/mo	36.17%	55.32%	14.89%	2.13%	
	17	26	7	1	47
\$601 - \$800/mo	8.05%	42.95%	54.36%	4.70%	
	12	64	81	7	149
\$801 - \$1000/mo	4.23%	17.61%	66.20%	21.13%	
	6	25	94	30	142
\$1001 - \$1500/mo	1.56%	2.34%	20.31%	80.47%	
	2	3	26	103	128
\$1501 - \$2000/mo	7.41%	0.00%	7.41%	85.19%	
	2	0	2	23	27
\$2000 +/mo	8.33%	0.00%	33.33%	58.33%	
	1	0	4	7	12



"We find good people and treat them with respect, if we have a good tenant, usually families we sometimes rent below market rates and try to respond to any issues as soon as possible."

Survey Respondent

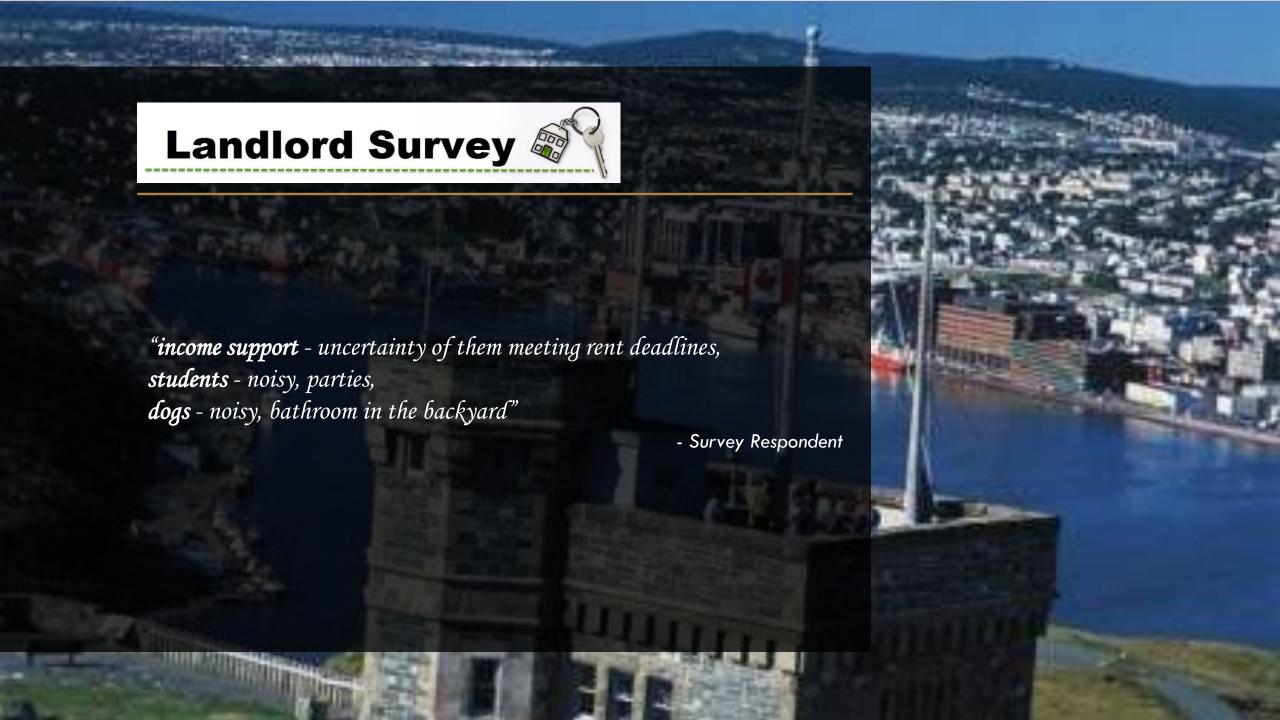


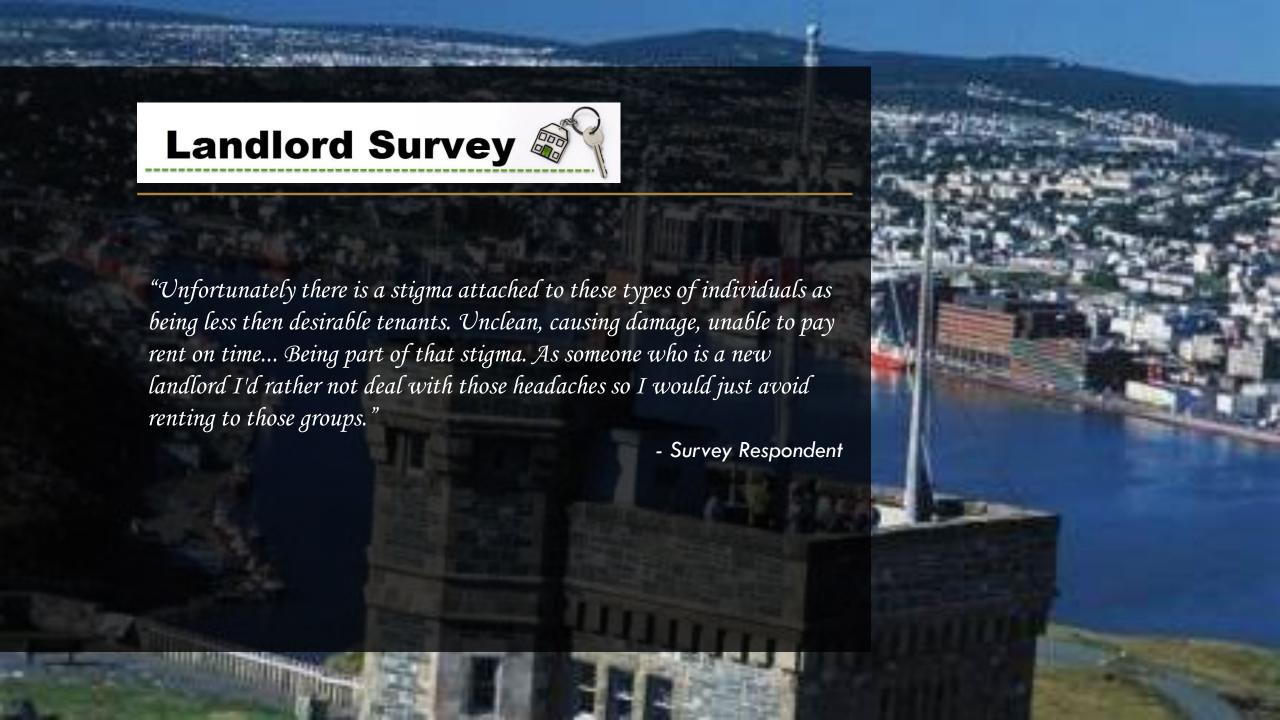
## Q6: ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS THAT YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO RENT TO (I.E. STUDENTS, SENIORS, INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING INCOME SUPPORT, INDIVIDUALS WITH PETS)? PLEASE LIST THESE GROUPS HERE. ANSWERED: 258 SKIPPED: 62

There are No particular types of Individuals that I am Less Likely to rent to	8.1%
No Answer	12.2%
Individuals with Pets	25.0%
Individuals that Smoke	8.1%
Individuals receiving Income Support	16.9%
Individuals with a Criminal History	1.6%
Individuals with Alcohol/Drug Issues	1.0%
Individuals that may have Noise/Damage issues (Partiers)	4.5%
Students	15.9%
Seniors	1.7%
Individuals with Financial Issues (Unemployed)	3.3%
Families with young Children	1.7%
Total	100.0%

## Q7: ARE THERE SPECIFIC REASONS THAT YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO RENT TO THESE INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS? ANSWERED: 236 SKIPPED: 84

No Reason/No Answer	25.6%
Previous Issues with Pets - High Risk for Damage/Odor	25.1%
Previous Issues with Students - High Risk for Property Damage/Disruptive Behaviour (Noise/Parties)	15.6%
Insurance will not Cover Property	1.1%
Individuals receiving Income Support - High Risk for not Collecting Rent	18.9%
Previous Issues with Smokers - High Risk for Damage/Odor	7.6%
Criminal History - High Risk for Property Damage/Disruptive Behaviour	4.4%
Children - Noise, Possible Property Damage	1.8%
Total	100.0%





# Q8: WE'D LIKE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE EXPERIENCES OF LOCAL LANDLORDS. PLEASE RANK THE ISSUES BELOW ACCORDING TO HOW COMMON THEY HAVE BEEN IN YOUR EXPERIENCE:

	Happens 5 + times a year	Happens 3 - 4 times a year	Happens 1 - 2 times a year	Has happened but in general less than once per year	Has never happened to me	Total	Weighted Average
Non-payment of rent	<b>7.57</b> % 23	<b>4.93</b> % 15	<b>8.55</b> % 26	<b>37.83</b> % 115	<b>41.12</b> % 125	304	4.00
Issues related to tenant behaviors (i.e. conflict with neighbours/landlord, multiple visitors, loud/parties, etc.)	<b>7.79</b> % 24	<b>9.74</b> % 30	<b>18.18%</b> 56	<b>36.69%</b> 113	<b>27.60%</b> 85	308	3.67
Damage to rental unit	<b>4.21</b> % 13	<b>9.06%</b> 28	<b>19.09</b> % 59	<b>44.66</b> % 138	<b>22.98</b> % 71	309	3.73
Difficulties in receiving payment from tenant	<b>13.31</b> % 41	<b>7.47</b> % 23	<b>9.09</b> % 28	<b>33.12%</b> 102	<b>37.01</b> % 114	308	3.73
Difficulties in receiving payment from government agencies (e.g. AES)	<b>2.36</b> % 7	<b>1.01%</b> 3	<b>3.03</b> %	<b>13.13</b> % 39	<b>80.47%</b> 239	297	4.68



**Q9:** REMEMBER, YOUR ANSWERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL! WE'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HOW YOU NORMALLY INTERACT WITH TENANTS.

### PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT REGULARLY APPLY WHEN YOU ARE RENTING OUT A UNIT:

- I charge a security deposit 93.36% (286)
- My tenants all sign a written lease 73.87% (229)
- I ask for references from past landlords 60.00% (186)
- I take pictures of the unit before each tenant moves in –
   58.71% (182)
- I have standard questions that I ask everyone who I interview, but I don't write down their answers 58.49% (181)
- I ask questions about their current employment or ask for employment references -57.42% (178)
- I check the prospective tenant out on the internet (Google, Facebook, Etc.) – 53.55% (166)
- My tenant and I sign a condition of premises report –
   52.94% (161)

Answer Choices	Respon	ises
I have standard questions that I ask everyone who I interview, but I don't write down their answers	58.39%	181
I have standard questions that I ask everyone, and I write down their answers	20.32%	63
l ask for references from past landlords	60.00%	186
I check references from past landlords	48.06%	149
My tenant and I sign a condition of premises report	51.94%	161
My tenants all sign a written lease	73.87%	229
I take pictures of the unit before each tenant moves in	58.71%	182
I know that the Newfoundland & Labrador Human Rights Act limits the questions I can ask, and I understand what these limits are	46.13%	143
I ask questions about their current employment or ask for employment references	57.42%	178
I check the prospective tenant out on the internet (Google, Facebook, etc.)	53.55%	166
I charge a security deposit.	92.26%	286
Please add anything else you regularly do when renting out a unit	21.29%	66
Total Respondents: 310		



"My motto is that I won't rent a property that I myself couldn't live in. I make sure a property is thoroughly cleaned before a tenant moves in, and that sets the stage for what I expect when they leave. I see it as my job to ensure that my tenants concerns and needs are addressed promptly, because I expect the same from them. It's a two-way street of mutual respect."

- Survey Respondent

## Landlord Survey

"Aligned interests. I live near MUN and I'm proud to offer a lovely family home within walking distance. I had a great conversation with one of my tenants, a post-grad from Egypt, about how happy he was at my house. Some of his friends live closer to the university but the houses are dirty and unkempt and 6-7 rooms share one bathroom, that type of thing. He says some students move to Canada (some from third-world countries) and their first month here is the worst of their lives until they find a new place to live. That breaks my heart. I have lived and worked all over the world and it is my pleasure to provide a great living situation for two international students. I know what it's like to be in their shoes - arriving in a new country is hard enough without having to worry about housing. I'm not opposed to having other types of tenants in future but this setup works best for me living so close to MUN."

- Survey Respondent

## QUESTION 10: IF YOU CHECKED THAT YOU CHARGE A SECURITY DEPOSIT, HOW MUCH ON AVERAGE IS THE DEPOSIT? ANSWERED: 279 SKIPPED: 41

50% of the Monthly Rent	43.4%
75% of the Monthly Rent	20.3%
Specific Amount - \$400 and Under	6.9%
Specific Amount - Between \$400 and \$750	4.7%
Specific Amount - \$750 and Over	2.8%
No Answer	15.9%
One Months Rent	2.8%
One Third Monthly Rent	0.9%
First and Last Months Rent	0.3%
25% of the Monthly Rent	0.9%
Two Thirds of the Monthly Rent	0.9%
Total	100%



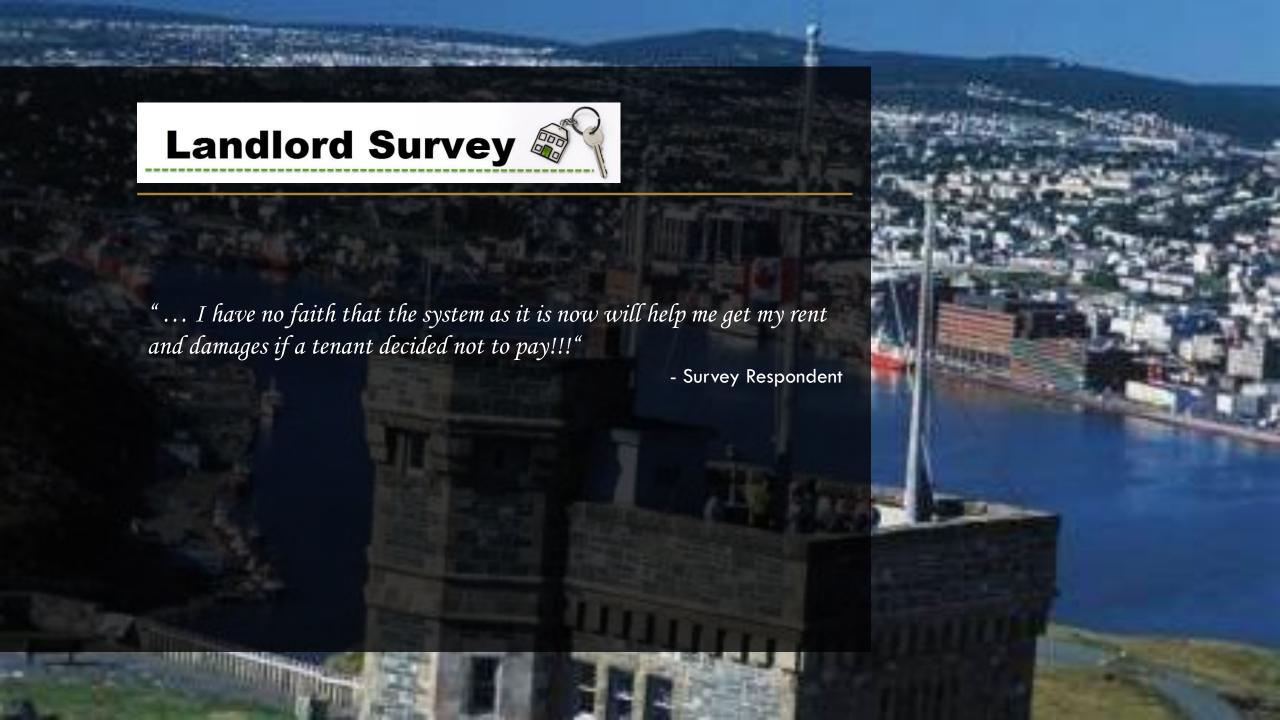
## Landlord Survey

"Luckily I have mostly had wonderful tenants, I try to select people that have things in common with me as we are sharing the property. I have a small child, so I regularly rent to others with small children. I also try to keep tenants upstairs and downstairs with the same schedule. I'm not going to rent upstairs to someone who is home all day with children running and playing and downstairs to someone who works night shift and needs to sleep during the day."

- Survey Respondent

# Q11: WE'RE TRYING TO BETTER UNDERSTAND WHAT SUPPORTS CURRENTLY EXIST FOR LANDLORDS. PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF:

Answer Choices	Respon	ses
I have read the Residential Tenancies Act	92.50%	296
I have used the sample Rental Agreement	74.69%	239
I have used the sample Rental Premises Condition Report	48.75%	156
I have talked with the Newfoundland & Labrador Residential Tenancies Officer	43.13%	138
I have searched online for landlord resources from other places	37.50%	120
I have talked informally with other local landlords	59.69%	191
I have talked with workers involved with my tenants (e.g. Social Workers, Community Workers, Housing Support Workers, etc.)	19.38%	62
Total Respondents: 320		



Answer Choices	Responses
Public recognition of landlords (I.e. Friendly or Ethical Landlord Awards)	<b>40.94%</b> 131
Ability to select tenant population of interest for units (i.e., veteran, single parent, individuals with disabilities, etc.)	<b>59.38%</b> 190
User-friendly handbook on landlord and tenant issues, including sample forms	<b>62.19%</b> 199
Assigned case manager to help landlords and tenants address problems and mediate conflicts	<b>52.19%</b> 167
Telephone helpline available to help landlords and tenants address problems and mediate conflicts	<b>49.38%</b> 158
Housing workers to help link higher-risk tenants and landlords, and provide support	<b>37.50%</b> 120
Assistance with property improvements	<b>56.88%</b> 182
Access to low-interest loans to repair damage caused by tenants	<b>39.38%</b> 126
Funding to repair damages to unit	<b>65.94</b> % 211
Funding to make units more accessible	<b>45.63%</b> 146
Education/Information sessions for landlords	<b>42.50%</b> 136
Education/Information sessions for tenants	<b>39.06%</b> 125
Certificates from tenants who take education programs to understand their responsibilities	<b>38.13</b> % 122
Online members-only database for landlords to post affordable housing, where housing workers can help match clients ( see Landlordconnect.ca)	<b>44.38%</b> 142
Landlords helping to advocate for improved housing allowances	<b>28.44</b> % 91
Total Respondents: 320	

Q12: YOU'RE ALMOST DONE! JUST A FEW MORE QUESTIONS THAT GET TO THE HEART OF WHY WE ARE CONTACTING YOU. AS A LANDLORD, YOU CAN PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN HELPING US TO END HOMELESSNESS! THERE ARE MANY POTENTIAL TENANTS IN ST. JOHN'S WHO MAY HAVE ISSUES FROM THEIR PAST THAT COULD KEEP THEM FROM BEING APPROVED FOR AN APARTMENT. UNFORTUNATELY, MANY OF THESE PEOPLE END UP HOMELESS, IN HOSPITALS, OR IN OTHER UNSTABLE HOUSING — OFTEN REPEATING THE SAME CYCLE OVER AND OVER AGAIN. WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS IN THE COMMUNITY TO IMPROVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR EVERYONE.

HERE ARE SOME TOOLS AND/OR INCENTIVES THAT ARE USED IN OTHER PLACES... PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT YOU THINK MIGHT BE USEFUL TO LOCAL LANDLORDS.

## Landlord Survey

"I have a tenant who is a working single parent. She finds it easier to pay her rent every two weeks when she gets paid so this is the arrangement we use. I talk to my tenant about her struggles and offer knowledge about resources to help her out."

- Survey Respondent

"Having a social worker to communicate with ."

- Survey Respondent

## Q13: WHAT OTHER IDEAS (FURTHER SUPPORTS AND PROGRAMS) COULD HELP LOCAL LANDLORDS? ANSWERED: 78 SKIPPED: 242

78.4%
4.1%
7.2%
0.9%
5.3%
0.3%
3.1%
0.3%
0.3%
100%



# Q14: WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL TENANT/LANDLORD RELATIONSHIP? (FEEL FREE TO SHARE A SUCCESS STORY!) ANSWERED: 320 SKIPPED: 0

Open Communication and Clear Expectations	37.8%
Trust and Mutual Respect	34.1%
Tenant is responsible, quiet, pays rent on time and does not cause any property damage	16.3%
Landlord provides good Customer Service (property management, safety, cleanliness, etc)	7.8%
No Answer	4.1%
Total	100%

### Landlord Survey

"An understanding that mutual respect leads to happiness on both sides. As a tenant, respect our property, understand we worked hard to purchase this property, pay your rent & we will take care of you. As a landlord, respect your tenant, upkeep your property, fix damages, ensure everything works, provide good working appliances, act swiftly to address any issues the tenant may have with property - working together to maintain the property is in the best interest of both parties."

## Landlord Survey

"Mutual respect is the most important factor. I try to establish a good relationship with tenants by listening and responding to their issues. Providing tenants with help during transition periods (moving) can help demonstrate that you respect them and care about their well-being. I provide them with advice on internet/cable providers, garbage collection schedules and regulations, keep the grounds clean, lawn mowed, etc. I have had to drop everything and let tenants into their apartments when they lock themselves out. It may be inconvenient at the time but helps with tenant retention. Reducing turnover saves money in the long run."

# Q15: WHAT INFORMATION COULD HELP YOU AS A LANDLORD (YOU CAN SELECT MORE THAN ONE)?

Answered: 320 Skipped: 0

- Tenant responsibilities 60.31% (193)
- Residential Tenancies Act 55.63% (178)
- Energy Efficiency Incentive Programs 50%
   (160)
- Landlord Responsibilities 47.19% (151)
- Dealing with conflict 46.25% (148)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Municipal requirements to creating a secondary suite	13.44%	43
Residential Tenancies Act	55.63%	178
Policy on Human Rights and Rental Housing	30.63%	98
Duty to Accommodate under the Human Rights Code	15.63%	50
Information on Income Support	30.94%	99
Information on programs and supports offered to tenants by community groups	26.25%	84
Energy Efficiency Incentive Programs	50.00%	160
Making units more accessible	22.50%	72
Tenant Responsibilities	60.31%	193
Landlord Responsibilities	47.19%	151
Dealing with conflict	46.25%	148
Providing housing to individuals with barriers	19.69%	63
Tenant Insights (success stories, etc.)	15.94%	51
Fire safety	27.19%	87
Information on Property Standards By-Law	27.50%	88
Other (please specify)	4.69%	15
Total Respondents: 320		



"Just allowing the person to live freely with respect and to know they respect the dwelling as you would. this is important in selecting a tenant. "- Survey Respondent

"Personal contact with tenants. We have lots of success stories...more than unsuccessful ones!" - Survey Respondent

### Q16: WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE INFORMATION OR NETWORKING SESSIONS FOR LANDLORDS?

Answered: 320 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	<b>62.19</b> % 199
No	<b>24.06</b> % 77
Other	<b>13.75</b> % 44
Total	320



### Landlord Survey

"My first tenants just moved out, they were renting when I bought my house. They were here for 4 years. I couldn't ask for better. When I moved in soon after there was a plumbing issue in the basement, I rectified it immediately, that set the tone for the relationship. They knew that I was going to be easy to get along with, and a responsible landlord. I think in turn that made them want to be responsible tenants. I always addressed concerns immediately, I always gave them a generous Christmas gift. Gave them a baked treat now and then. Checked in on there cat while they were on vacation. It just pays to be nice, and do a little extra. They just purchased their own home! I'll miss them dearly, my new tenant moves in Nov 1!"



"I had this one lady - a spinster all her life rent the basement apartment of my family home where we resided. She was with us for 30 years. She was dear. Helpful in raising our kids and such. 15 years into the 30 years my wife and I paid off the mortgage. Our tenant enjoyed 15 years rent free."









Affordable Housing Forum:

### LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT

Supporting successful tenancies - Where do you fit?



We would like to develop more partnerships with landlords. This event, taking place on National Housing Day, is hosted by the City of St. John's in partnership with our Rental Team.

### Please join us for LUNCH, presentations and networking!

For this event, we are targeting landlords and service providers that work directly with landlords and tenants.

Date: Tuesday, November 22, 2016 Registration/Coffee: 8:30am

Forum: 9am-1pm

Location: Foran Room, 4th Floor - City Hall

### AGENDA

- Housing First 101/Landlord Engagement: Wally Czech, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
- Update on End Homelessness St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness: Bruce Pearce
- . Update on the City's Affordable Housing Business Plan: Maria Callahan
- Networking Visit booths with information provided from our community partners
- WIN PRIZES!!

### Admission is free but space is limited.

Please register and advise of any special requirements by November 14th to: Maria Callahan,
Affordable Housing & Development Facilitator, City of St. John's
Tel: (709) 570-2096, Email: affordablehousingevents@stjohns.ca

# LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT FORUM

This event took place at City Hall on National Housing Day, November 22, 2016.

Over 80 people attended!

### **NEXT STEPS**

- The results of the Landlord Survey will be used by the Landlord Engagement Sub-Committee and the Rental Team to frame our Landlord Engagement plans moving forward as well as identify strengths, challenges and opportunities.
- We have applied to the Federal Innovative Solutions to Homelessness (ISH funding) for a pilot Landlord Engagement Coordinator/Landlord Mitigation Fund.
- \* We will start to plan landlord information/ education sessions for 2017.
- \* The Landlord Newsletter will continue as a point of contact and we will work to recruit more landlords.

New

Lease

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Maria Callahan

Affordable Housing & Development Facilitator

City of St. John's

Tel. 709-570-2096

Email: mcallahan@stjohns.ca

