

**To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board**

**On: 29 August 2017**

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**Report by: Director of Development and Housing Services**

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**Heading: Scottish Social Housing Charter: Annual Return 2016/2017**

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords are required to submit an Annual Return relating to their performance to the Scottish Housing Regulator by the end of May each year. This report provides details of the submission by Renfrewshire Council for 2016/17.
- 1.2 The report also provides information on the review of the Scottish Housing Charter which has been issued by the Scottish Government setting out the standards and outcomes social landlords are expected to meet.
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**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
- (i) The Board notes the submission made by the Director of Development and Housing Services on the Scottish Social Housing Charter as attached at Appendix 1.
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**3. Background**

- 3.1. The report attached as Appendix 1 gives outturn performance information for Renfrewshire Council for 2016/17.
- Section 1 provides a summary of Renfrewshire Council's performance against the Charter indicators along with comparative information for the last three years.

- Section 2 gives details of some core contextual data which was also submitted as part of the Charter return.
  - Section 3 provides additional service and performance management information for 2016/17
- 3.2. Overall, the return on the Charter demonstrates strong ongoing improvement by the Council's Housing Service, with the majority of performance indicators improving on last year (19 indicators) or the same as last year (8 indicators) with seven reporting slight dips in performance
- 3.3. All Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords were required to submit their return to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 May 2017. This is an annual requirement. The Scottish Housing Regulator publishes all social landlords' performance on its website in August 2017. In October, in common with other councils and RSLs, the Council will be required to report its performance against the Charter to all tenants.
- 3.4. In accordance with guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator and practice over the last two years we will consult with tenants on the preferred format for the Tenant's Report. A report will be presented to a later meeting of this Policy Board which benchmarks Renfrewshire Council's performance in 2015/16 against other Social Landlords.
- 3.5. When launched, the Scottish Government advised that the Scottish Social Housing Charter would be reviewed in time. In April 2017, a revised Charter was issued following consultation and this is attached as Appendix 2 for information.
- 3.6. There will be a review of indicators this year by the Scottish Housing Regulator that reflects the changes within the Charter document. Further details on this will be reported to Board when available.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community Planning**  
**Empowering our Communities** - Improving and maintaining neighbourhoods and homes  
**Safer and Stronger** – Increasing resident satisfaction with neighbourhoods and communities
4. **Legal** –None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None

6. **Information Technology** – None
  7. **Equality & Human Rights** – None
  8. **Health & Safety** – None
  9. **Procurement** – None
  10. **Risks** – None
  11. **Privacy Impact** – None
  12. **Cosla Policy Position** – N/A
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### **List of Background Papers**

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Development & Housing Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

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# **Scottish Social Housing Charter**

## **Annual Return**

### **2016 -2017**

Planning & Housing Team

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**Renfrewshire**  
Council

# **Scottish Social Housing Charter 2016-2017 Annual Return**

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**Section 2 Contextual indicators**

**Section 3 Management Information**

## SECTION 1: OUT-TURN REPORT (2016-2017)

### Overall Satisfaction

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
1	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord.	(a)82.0%	(a)82.0%	(b)82.2%	(b) <b>82.2%</b>	The most recent data relates to the 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A Tenant Satisfaction survey is being commissioned for 2017/18.

Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

(b) 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

### 1. The Customer Landlord Relationship

#### Equalities

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
2	Ethnic origins and disability details of service users.	Progress towards Renfrewshire Council's 6 equalities outcomes is reported annually to Council, with high level summary and analysis of tenants' equalities data appended to that report. At a service level, progress is monitored and reported through the service improvement planning process, with updates presented to the policy board on a 6 monthly basis. The data submitted as part of the Annual Return on the Charter includes the number of tenants, housing list applicants and new tenants who consider themselves to have a disability. The figure for 2016/17 are 2,040 existing tenants (15.3%), 1,310 housing applicants (19.6%) and 390 new tenants (26.4%).			

#### Communication

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
3	Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions.	(a)79.2%	(a)79.2%	(b)79.5%	(b) <b>79.5%</b>	The most recent data relates to the 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A Tenant Satisfaction survey is being commissioned for 2017/18.

Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

(b) 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

#### Complaints

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
4	Percentage of 1st and 2nd stage complaints, including those related to equalities issues, responded to in full in the last year, that were resolved by the landlord and also the percentage upheld.	94.9%	98.2%	93.3%	<b>91.4%</b>	The Service received 547, 1 <sup>st</sup> stage (responded to within 5 working days) complaints during the year, of which 268 were upheld. There were 14 2 <sup>nd</sup> stage (responded to within 20 working days) complaints of which 7 of these were upheld.
5	Percentage of 1st and 2nd stage complaints responded to in full in the last year, within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Model Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP) timescales.	94.9%	90.2%	46.15%	<b>78.6%</b>	

## Participation

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
6	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in their landlord's decision making processes.	(a)69.0%	(a)69.0%	(b)84.2%	(b) <b>84.2%</b>	The most recent data relates to the 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A Tenant Satisfaction survey is being commissioned for 2017/18.

Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey  
(b) 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

## Housing quality and maintenance

### Housing Quality

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
7	Percentage of stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). <i>After applying allowable exclusions and abeyances, the Council remains 100% compliant with the SHQS target.</i>	62.1%	84.6%	85.9%	<b>91.4%</b>	Last year the service brought a further 698 properties up to SHQS. At the end of 2016/17, 11,168 of the Council's stock of 12,220 properties met the SHQS. The Council has 1,052 properties in abeyance where the current tenant has refused internal works/ the Council has been unable to secure owner participation to allow external works to be carried out to comply with SHQS.
8	Percentage of properties at or above the appropriate NHER (National Home Energy Rating) or SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) ratings specified in element 35 of the SHQS, as at 31 March each year.	85.1%	97.4%	98.5%	<b>98.0%</b>	Of the Council's 12,220 properties, 11,979 met the appropriate NHER or SAP rating at the end of March 2017. The small decrease in the proportion properties meeting the NHER standard compared to last year is due to small shifts in the profile of the Council's stock as a result of Right to Buy sales.
9	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in.	(a)61.4%	(b)80%	(b)92.3%	(b) <b>89.5%</b>	419 tenants who moved into their property last year responded to a survey asking about the standard of their home - 375 were 'very satisfied' (185) or 'satisfied' (190). Analysis of the survey returns does not point to any particular issues which would explain the small reduction in satisfaction levels from 2015/16. This indicator will



No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
						continue to be monitored.
10	Percentage of existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home.	(a)81.6%	(a)81.6%	(b)82.2%	(b) <b>82.2%</b>	The most recent data relates to the 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A Tenant Satisfaction survey is being commissioned for 2017/18.

9) Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

(b) Point of service survey

10) Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

(b) 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

### Repairs, maintenance and improvements

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
11	Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs. (hours)	11.5	5.8	5.5	<b>6.9%</b>	The Council arranged for over 54,000 housing repairs in 16/17. Of these, over 15,700 emergency repairs were completed in an average time of 6.9 hours. This is a slight reduction in performance compared to the previous year. Ongoing monitoring is taking place to ensure manual data input is robust and any emergency repairs with particularly long timescales are reviewed. Plans for an improved mobile platform will minimise the need for manual inputting in the future.
12	Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs. (days)	8.5	8.5	8.4	<b>7.4%</b>	Over 38,500 non emergency repairs were completed in an average of 7.4 days. This is an improvement from 8.4 days the previous year and reflects work to improve staff training/ support on the allocation of repair requests.. A repairs bulletin was produced to improve understanding and accuracy of repairs reporting.
13	Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time.	87.8%	87.5%	90.8%	<b>94.8%</b>	More than 34,600 reactive repairs were completed 'right first time' last year. This represents more than 9 out of 10 repairs (94.8%) and shows very good performance in efficiently and effectively diagnosing repair problems and in planning for work to be completed.
14	Percentage of repairs appointments kept.	95.0%	98.9%	99.1%	<b>99.0%</b>	The Council operates a repairs appointment system. Almost 33,000 reactive repairs appointments were made last year and the appointment was kept in 99% of cases.
15	Percentage of properties that require a gas safety record which had a gas safety check and record completed by	99.99%	99.99%	99.5%	<b>99.97%</b>	10,630 Council houses required gas safety records last year. For 10,627 properties (99.97%) , the gas safety record was renewed by the anniversary date. For 3 properties, the safety check was renewed after

	the anniversary date.					the anniversary date.
16	Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.	(a)78.0%	(b)94.7%	(b)96.6%	<b>(b)91.4%</b>	Just under 5,000 interviews were carried out on repairs satisfaction. Around 4,500 were satisfied or very satisfied with the repairs service. Only 19 respondents said they were dissatisfied.

(16) Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey (b) Point of service survey

### 3. Neighbourhood and community

#### Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
17	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood they live in.	(a)81.2	(a)81.2%	(b)82.5%	<b>(b)82.5%</b>	The most recent data relates to the 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A Tenant Satisfaction survey is being commissioned for 2017/18.
18	Percentage of tenancy offers refused during the year.	61.3%	59.6%	46.1%	<b>39.6%</b>	Just over 800 offers of tenancy were refused last year from a total of 2033. Performance in this area continues to improve which is due to improvements in the allocation process and matching people to properties.
19	Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported in the last year which were resolved within locally agreed targets.	93.7%	91.6%	92.9%	<b>96.4%</b>	568 anti social behaviour cases were resolved within target last year from 589 cases last year.

(17) Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey  
(b) 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

### 4. Access to housing and support

#### Tenancy sustainment

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
20	Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year, by source of let.					Last year saw an overall improvement in tenancy sustainment levels – with 87.5% of all new tenancies sustained for more than a year. This improvement is most notable amongst homeless applicants, with 246 of 315 new tenants sustaining their tenancy for more than a year. This has been helped by ongoing support from staff at the George Street service who work closely with 16 – 25 year old clients, through the ‘Home for Keeps’ service, to provide tenancy training and practical assistance.
	Existing tenants	90.8%	94.2%	91.0%	<b>88.4%</b>	
	Homeless applicants	75.4%	81.4%	72.1%	<b>78.1%</b>	
	Housing List applicants	87.9%	86.9%	87.4%	<b>91.9%</b>	
	Other	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	
		<b>85.0%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>84.5%</b>	<b>87.5%</b>	

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
	<b>Overall</b>					The Housing Service also provides support for new tenants to ensure that benefits are maximised and other measures are in place to sustain new tenancies.
21	Percentage of lettable houses that became vacant in the last year.	11%	10.2%	10.2%	<b>9.7%</b>	During the year 2016/2017, 1,147 properties became vacant. This is around 100 less than last year.

## Housing options and access to housing

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
22	Percentage of approved applications for medical adaptations completed during the reporting year.	98.6%	87.8%	96.0%	<b>97.0%</b>	363 medical adaptations were completed during 16/17. The average time to complete remained stable at 44 days.
23	Average time to complete applications (medical adaptations) days	61	64	44	<b>44</b>	
24	Percentage of the court actions initiated which resulted in eviction and the reasons for eviction.	26.1%	20.3%	23.1%	<b>26.4%</b>	There were 265 court actions initiated last year. This led to the recovery of 68 properties for non payment of rent and 2 properties for anti social behaviour.
	Non payment of rent		19.4%	22.2%	<b>25.7%</b>	
	Anti social behaviour		0.5%	0.8%	<b>0.8%</b>	
	Other		0.5%	0%	<b>0</b>	

## Homelessness

No	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
25	Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation by type, days (LAs only)					Over the last year, 739 households occupied temporary accommodation in Renfrewshire: 589 in Council short-stay housing; 47 in housing association properties; 98 in 'other' types of accommodation including supported housing; and 5 in bed and breakfast accommodation. The average length of stay in temporary accommodation has increased to 87 days. Staff work with clients to make sure that once they are ready to move on from temporary accommodation, they are better able to keep a permanent tenancy.
	Local authority dwelling	43.3	44.9	78.9	<b>82</b>	
	RSL Dwelling	81	89.4	39.3	<b>101.6</b>	
	Bed and Breakfast	10	0	0	<b>2.4</b>	
	Other	139.1	98.5	101.9	<b>112</b>	
	All types of accommodation	47.2	56.9	79.3	<b>87</b>	
26 & 27	Percentage of households requiring temporary or emergency	100%	99.1%	99.5%	<b>100%</b>	The Council made an offer of temporary accommodation to 786 households during 2016/17. This represents 100% of all

No	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
	accommodation to whom an offer was made. (LAs only)					households where the Council was required to make an offer of temporary or emergency accommodation.
	Percentage of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused in the last year by accommodation type. (LAs only)					Less than 2% of clients refused temporary accommodation. This low level of refusal reflects the quality of temporary accommodation and the support arrangements in place.
	L A Dwelling	1.9%	2.4%	2.4%	<b>2.5</b>	
	RSL Dwelling	0%	1.6%	0	<b>0</b>	
	Bed and Breakfast	11.5%	N/A	N/A	<b>0</b>	
	Other	0%	0%	0	<b>0</b>	
	All types of accommodation	2.9%	1.96%	2.1%	<b>1.9%</b>	
28	Of those households homeless in the last 12 months the percentage satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation. (LAs only).	87.9%	92.3%	74.5%	<b>83.2%</b>	The level of satisfaction with temporary accommodation increased to 83.2% in 2016/17.

(28) Source: annual point of service homeless services tenants survey

## 5. Getting good value from rents and service charges

### Value for money

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
29	Percentage of tenants who feel that the rent for their property represents good value for money.	(a)75.0%	(a)75%	(b)77.2%	(b)77.2%	The most recent data relates to the 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A Tenant Satisfaction survey is being commissioned for 2017/18.

(29) Source: (a) 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

(b) 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey

### Rents and service charges

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	Notes
30	Rent collected as percentage of total rent due in the reporting year.	99.6%	100.2%	100%	<b>100.1%</b>	The Council collected over £45.6 million last year in rent.
31	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year.	5.6%	6.3%	6.0%	<b>5.35%</b>	Rent arrears continue to fall due to ongoing early intervention work to provide support and advice at an early stage and ensure that arrears do not build up.
32	Average annual management fee per factored property.	N/A	£90.00	£90.00	<b>£90.00</b>	The annual management fee has remained the same for three years
33	Percentage of factored owners	23.8%	45.4%	50.9%	<b>57.6%</b>	Satisfaction continues to improve.

	satisfied with the factoring service they receive.					
34	Percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty during the last year.	2.6%	2.0%	1.9%	<b>1.5%</b>	In 2016/17 empty properties were re-let more quickly (the average void period was down to 38 days) and the proportion of rental income lost through voids fell to 1.5%. This improved performance reflects a number of initiatives, including proactive marketing, decentralisation of the letting service to promote increased local knowledge, improved void management process and better cross service working. In addition, a preferred supplier for utilities will help further improve the overall average days to let.
35	Average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year. (days)	56	44	42	<b>38</b>	

(33) Source: Annual owners services survey

### Section 6 Other Customers; Gypsies/ Travellers

No.	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
36	Gypsies/travellers – Average weekly rent per pitch.	Not applicable, no sites in Renfrewshire			
37	For those who provide sites - percentage of gypsies/travellers satisfied with the landlord's management of the site.				

## SECTION 2B: CORE CONTEXTUAL INDICATORS

The Charter also has 32 contextual indicators that relate to the stock and profile of our service users. Not all of these are reported by local authorities (7 are relevant to RSL only), similarly some are reported in such a way that it is not conducive to present in tabular format for this report. The core contextual indicators are included in the table below:

Number	Indicator	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
7	Number of lets during the reporting year				
	General Needs	1,385	1190	1124	1144
	Supported Housing *	48	45	51	43
8	Number of lets during the reporting year, by source of let				
	Existing tenants	278	243	241	239
	Housing List applicants	821	698	618	666
	Other sources	0	0	1	3
	Homeless applicants	334	294	315	279
9	Types of tenancies granted for the reporting year				
	Occupancy agreements	0	0	0	0
	Short SST	28	12	6	3
	SST	1405	1223	1169	1184
10	Housing Lists				
	New applicants	2661	3315	3216	3335
	Applicants on list at end of year	6332	6239	5749	5645
	Suspensions	157	169	122	106
	Cancelled	4020	3607	3965	3421
11	Abandoned properties	196	206	163	141

12	Number of notices of proceedings issued	1178	1474	1755	1944
	The number of orders for recovery of possession granted during the reporting year	94	105	133	139
13	Average number of reactive repairs completed per occupied property	5.7	5.5	5.4	4.7
14	The Landlords wholly owned stock	12666	12497	12393	12220
17	Stock by house type				
	House	2660	2640	2627	2562
	High Rise	1100	1010	1005	1003
	Tenement	4949	4910	4864	4809
	4 in block	2865	2849	2829	2784
	Other flat/maisonette	1092	1088	1068	1062
20	Number of self contained properties void at the year end	487	480	431	354
	Void for more than 6 months	79	79	78	77
21	Rent increase	3.5%	3.5%	2.0%	0%
22	Number of households for which landlords are paid housing costs	8304	8442	8971	8168
	Value of direct housing cost payments received during the year	£27,868,900	£28,905,400	£28,732,900	£28,306,500
23	Percentage of former tenant rent arrears written off at the year end	21.6%	44.3%	54.9%	37%

\* Sheltered housing only

## SECTION 3: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

### Allocations and Managing Tenancy Change

In 2016/17, 1,187 properties were let by the Council. Most of these lets (89.81%) were made through the group system. Within the group system, just over half 55.72% of lets went to applicants in Group 3 (Housing Need) and 26.17% of lets went to Group 1 (Homeless) applicants.

Table 1 notes the number of applicants.

Table 1 - Housing Waiting List		
	2015/16	2016/2017
Number of applicants on housing list - at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017	5749	5645
Of which number who have their application on hold	1,269	1255

Table 2 illustrates where the applicants are placed in the group system.

Table 2 - Housing Waiting List Breakdown				
	2015/16		2016/17	
Group	Applicants	%	Applicants	%
Group 1 Homeless	203	3.53	231	4.09%
Group 2 Mobility	348	6.05	303	5.37%
Group 3 Housing Need	2272	39.52	2286	40.50%
Group 4 Exchanges	1105	19.22	1087	19.26%
Group 5 General	1821	31.68	1738	30.79%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5749</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5645</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 3 shows lets made through and outwith the group system.

Table 3 - Total lets				
	2015/16		2016/17	
	Number	%	Number	%
Lets through group system	1068	90.89	1066	89.81%
Lets outwith group system	107	9.11	121	10.19%
<b>Total Lets</b>	<b>1175</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1187</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 4 shows lets to each group and also the target for lets to each group.

Table 4 - Lets through group system					
	2015/16		2016/17		2016/17 Targets
Group	Lets	%	Lets	%	%
Group 1 Homeless	316	29.59%	279	26.17%	45%
Group 2 Mobility	105	9.83%	110	10.32%	5%
Group 3 Housing Need	544	50.94%	594	55.72%	40%
Group 4 Exchanges	77	7.21%	56	5.25%	9%
Group 5 General	26	2.43%	27	2.53%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1066</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*taking account of rounding

Table 5 gives details for lets outwith the group system.

Table 5 - Lets Outwith Group System				
	2015/16		2016/17	
Category	Lets	%	Lets	%
Sheltered	51	20.56%	44	36.36%
Special Lets	22	31.78%	28	23.14%
Regeneration	34	47.66%	49	40.50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 6 shows lets by house type.

Table 6 - Lets by House Type				
	2015/16		2016/17	
House Type	Number	%	Number	%
Tenement Flat	582	49.5%	628	52.91
Own Door Flat	239	20.3%	207	17.44
Multi-storey Flat	78	6.6%	75	6.32
House	73	6.2%	83	6.99
Other Flat	95	8.1%	85	7.16
Maisonette	33	2.8%	34	2.86
Bungalow	23	2.0%	31	2.61
Amenity Flat	1	0.1%	0	0.00
Prefab	1	0.1%	0	0.00
Sheltered Bungalow	8	0.7%	9	0.76
Sheltered Flat	42	3.6%	35	2.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>1175</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1187</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 7 shows section 5 and nomination lets for 2016/17

Table 7 Nomination & S5 Lets						
	Council nomination lets		% of overall lets to Council nominations	Section 5 lets	% lets to Section 5	% overall lets to Council
	General stock	Specialist/sheltered/supported		General stock		
Q1	24	6	14.8%	24	15.4%	26.7%
Q2	20	19	20%	16	9.2%	23.9%
Q3	14	7	10.7%	12	7.9%	16.8%
Q4	6	5	5.8%	26	16.2%	19.4%
Total	64	37	12.3%	78	12.2%	21.9%

Section 5 = general stock only (excludes specialist)



## Repairs

In 2016/17 54,162 repairs were carried out and 93% of these were completed within the target timescale. This is a slight decrease on 2015/16 when 94% of repairs were completed within target.

Table 8 provides data in respect of repairs completed by category of repair:

- an emergency repair is classed as one where there is a threat to health and safety or where we need to take quick action to prevent damage
- 'right to repair' qualifying repairs are urgent repairs which must be carried out within a specified timescale in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- routine repairs are every day repairs which are required as a result of normal wear and tear of the property
- programmed repairs are generally non-urgent general maintenance repairs which are carried out on a programmed basis rather than carrying out individual responsive repairs (usually larger scale repairs within common ownership)

Table 8 – Repairs			
Category of Repair	Total Completed	Total completed in target time	% completed in target time
Emergency Completed	11,054	10,782	98%
Right to Repair Completed	12,694	12,359	97%
Urgent Completed	1,564	1,484	95%
Routine Completed	28,054	24,839	89%
Programmed Completed	796	793	100%
Total Repairs Completed	54,162	50,257	93%

Table 9 provides information on Customer Contact Centre performance in relation to housing repairs calls. This shows the volume of calls in 2016/17 and outcomes for calls received. Over 65,282 calls were made to report repairs and 83% of these were answered. This is an increase on performance in 2015/16 (when 77% of calls were answered). The average waiting time for all calls was 3 minutes and 40 seconds. This was a rise in waiting time from 2015/16 (when the average waiting time was 3 minutes and 30 Seconds). Overall, 45% of calls were answered within the service level target (40 seconds).

The Ren Repairs App saw an increase in usage from 2018 repairs in 2015/16 to 3079 logged in this manner in 2016/17.

Table 9 - Customer contact centre		
Indicator	Number	Percentage
Total calls attempted	65,282	
Calls answered	54,461	83%
Calls abandoned	11,091	17%
Calls answered within 40 second target time	24,709	45%
% of all attempted calls answered within 40 sec target (service level)		38%
Average waiting time	00:03:40	
Maximum waiting time (average)	01:19:14	
'Ren Repairs' app (email correspondence)	3079	
'Ren Repairs' registered repairs	2476	

## Homelessness and Housing Advice

The number of homeless applications reduced during 2016/17. This is a continuing trend and is in line with the national picture. It is largely due to the housing options approach which is being used by social landlords, and the impact of the range of homeless prevention measures that are now in place, such as family mediation.

<b>Table 10 Homeless Applications</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Number of homeless applications requiring assessment	981	839	832	776
Total number of service users – those who were homeless, threatened with homelessness, or requiring housing options advice.	1978	2154	2098	2103

Table 11 provides information on the number of applications that were assessed as being statutorily homeless, or threatened with homelessness. Performance in terms of time taken to complete assessments continues to compare well with other Scottish local authorities.

<b>Table 11 Decision Making</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Number of applications assessed as 'homeless or threatened with homelessness' (ie the Council had a duty to rehouse)	736	684	689	618
Proportion of assessments completed within 28 days	88%	84%	95.5%	91%

From April 2016 – March 2017, 309 service users completed a 'satisfaction card' following their interview with a Housing Options Adviser or member of the Homeless Prevention team, and where clients gave an opinion after engaging with the service :

- 95.8 % were pleased with the quality of advice and information they were given.
- 97.4% were pleased with the overall quality of the service they received.

## SECTION 3: Rent Arrears

The reported rent arrears position continues to improved, with a reduction of £45,000 from 2015/16, despite the pressures of Welfare Reform and the roll out of Universal Credit. This continuing improvement reflects the focus on rent collection throughout the year, including the maximisation of DHPs for those under occupying.

Table 12 shows that the annual rental income that due to be collected is over £46m. At the end of March 2016, £1,194,900 was owed in arrears.

<b>Table 12 - Current Tenant Rent Arrears</b>				
	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Annual Rental Income	£43,973,300	£45,092,800	£46,110,300	£46,355,300
Number of Tenants	11,914	11,835	11,657	11,479
Total Arrears Owed All	£1,355,600	£1,248,600	£1,239,900	£1,194,900

Table 13 shows the recovery action taken and notes that there have been 10 evictions enforced in the last year for rent arrears.

<b>Table 13 – Recovery Action</b>				
	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
NPRP issued	1,176	1,469	1,756	1,944
All Cases calling at Court	850	773	947	1057
Decrees Granted	96	103	133	139
Evictions enforced S/Officer	8	4	10	10
Average time first calling	10 weeks	10 weeks	10 weeks	10 weeks
Average time recalled at court	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks	4.5 Weeks

Table 14 provides a profile of arrears by value and table 15 shows the status of arrears debt.

<b>Table 14 – Profile of Arrears by Value</b>				
	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Under £250	£124,000	£113,700	£88,000	£99,700
Between £250 & £500	£212,300	£81,400	£159,800	£170,900
Between £500 & £1,000	£382,300	£345,500	£350,500	£386,200
Over £1,000	£637,000	£608,000	£641,600	£538,100
TOTALS	£1,355,600	£1,248,600	£1,239,900	£1,194,900

<b>Table 15 – Status of Rent Debt</b>				
	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Arrears Pre Court	£868,300	£769,900	£733,700	£666,600
Arrears Post Court	£384,500	£376,000	£413,000	£411,300
Arrears Rent Direct	£102,800	£102,700	£93,200	£117,000
TOTALS	£1,355,600	£1,248,600	£1,239,900	£1,194,900

Table 16 shows the amount owed by tenants by age profile. Just under 69% of the arrears are from tenants aged between 25 and 49 years, with tenants over the age of 60 having the least amount of arrears.

<b>Table 16 – Profile of Arrears by Age</b>				
	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Under 25 years	£175,800	£159,100	£155,900	£150,500
Between 25 & 49 years	£939,100	£859,700	£849,600	£812,700
Between 50 & 60 years	£198,700	£188,600	£192,400	£188,300
Over 60	£42,000	£41,200	£42,000	£43,400
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>£1,355,600</b>	<b>£1,248,600</b>	<b>£1,239,900</b>	<b>£1,194,900</b>

Table 17 provides summary information on benefit levels comparing with previous years. Benefit uptake remains high with 71% of our tenants in receipt of some form of benefit.

<b>Table 17 – Housing Benefit</b>				
	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Number of tenants	11,914	11,835	11,657	11,479
Tenants with benefit	8,304	8,442	8,263	8,168
Tenants without benefit	3,610	3,393	3,394	3,311
% in receipt of Housing Benefit	70%	71%	71%	71%



# The Scottish Social Housing Charter

April 2017



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# The Scottish Social Housing Charter

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1 Status of the Charter

1.1 As required by section 31 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, the Scottish Ministers, in this Scottish Social Housing Charter, set the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities.

1.2 The first Charter came into effect on 1 April 2012 and was reviewed during 2016. This revised Charter was approved by resolution of the Scottish Parliament on 8th February, has effect from 1 April 2017 and continues to apply until the Parliament approves a further revised Charter.

1.3 Before submitting the revised Charter to the Scottish Parliament for approval, and as required by section 33 of the 2010 Act, the Scottish Ministers consulted the Scottish Housing Regulator; tenants in social housing and their representative bodies; social landlords; homeless people; and other stakeholders about the Charter's contents. They have taken account of all their views to ensure that the outcomes in the Charter:

- describe the results that tenants and other customers expect social landlords to achieve
- cover social landlords' housing activities only
- can be monitored, assessed and reported upon by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

1.4 The Charter does not replace any of the legal duties that apply to social landlords, but in several cases the outcomes describe the results social landlords should achieve in meeting their legal duties.

## 2 Purpose of the Charter

2.1 The Charter helps to improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide, and supports the Scottish Government's long-term aim of creating a safer and stronger Scotland. It does so by:

- stating clearly what tenants and other customers can expect from social landlords, and helping them to hold landlords to account
- focusing the efforts of social landlords on achieving outcomes that matter to their customers
- providing the basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator to assess and report on how well landlords are performing. This assessment enables the Regulator, social landlords, tenants and other customers to identify areas of strong performance and areas needing improvement.

2.2 The Regulator's reports also help the Scottish Government to ensure that public investment in new social housing goes only to landlords assessed as performing well.

## 3 Scope and content of the outcomes and standards

3.1 The Charter has seven sections covering: equalities; the customer/landlord relationship; housing quality and maintenance; neighbourhood and community; access to housing and support; getting good value from rents and service charges; and other customers. It contains a total of 16 outcomes and standards that social landlords should aim to achieve. The outcomes and standards apply to all social landlords, except that number 12 applies only to councils in relation to their homelessness duties; and number 16 applies only to councils and registered social landlords that manage sites for Gypsy/Travellers.

3.2 Each section is accompanied by a short description of the context of the outcome or standard, including the areas of activity to which it applies and any relevant legal duties connected with it. The description is not part of the outcome, and does not tell social landlords how to achieve it. That is a matter for each landlord to decide in consultation with its tenants and other customers.

3.3 During the Charter review, many stakeholders said that all the standards and outcomes should be reflected across the whole of a landlord's activities. For example, the communication outcome requires landlords to manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate



with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord. This information would include how and why their landlord makes decisions and provides its services; how it communicates its plans for providing repairs, maintenance and improvements; how it provides information on housing options; and how it helps tenants sustain their tenancy.

## **4 Assessing social landlords' achievement of the outcomes**

4.1 Social landlords are responsible for meeting the standards and outcomes set out in the Charter. They are accountable to their tenants and other customers for how well they do so. They should ensure their performance management and reporting systems show how well they are achieving the outcomes; identify any areas where they need to improve; and enable them to report to their tenants and other customers and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

4.2 Under the 2010 Act, the Scottish Housing Regulator is responsible for monitoring, assessing and reporting on how well social landlords, individually and collectively, achieve the Charter's outcomes.

## **5 Reviewing and revising the Charter**

5.1 Unless stakeholders raise urgent and significant concerns about how the Charter is working in practice, the Charter will apply for five years from 1 April 2017. In consultation with stakeholders, the Ministers will review its effect during 2021 on the quality and value of social landlords' services, and its value to tenants and other customers, social landlords and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

## 2. Charter outcomes and standards

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### The customer/landlord relationship

#### 1: Equalities

Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that:

- *every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.*

This **outcome** describes what social landlords, by complying with equalities legislation, should achieve for all tenants and other customers regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. It includes landlords' responsibility for finding ways of understanding the rights and needs of different customers and delivering services that recognise and meet these.

#### 2: Communication

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

- *tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.*

This **outcome** covers all aspects of landlords' communication with tenants and other customers. This could include making use of new technologies such as web-based tenancy management systems and smart-phone applications. It is not just about how clearly and effectively a landlord gives information to those who want it. It also covers making it easy for tenants and other customers to make complaints and provide feedback on services, using that information to improve services and performance, and letting people know what they have done in response to complaints and feedback. It does not require landlords to provide legally protected, personal or commercial information.

### 3: Participation

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

- *tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.*

This **outcome** describes what landlords should achieve by meeting their statutory duties on tenant participation. It covers how social landlords gather and take account of the views and priorities of their tenants, other customers, and bodies representing them such as registered tenant organisations; how they shape their services to reflect these views; and how they help tenants, other customers and bodies representing them such as registered tenant organisations to become more capable of involvement – this could include supporting them to scrutinise landlord services.

## Housing quality and maintenance

### 4: Quality of housing

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

- *tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated; are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair; and also meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by December 2020.*

This **standard** describes what landlords should be achieving in all their properties. It covers all properties that social landlords let, unless a particular property does not have to meet part of the standard.

If, for social or technical reasons, landlords cannot meet any part of these standards, they should regularly review the situation and ensure they make improvements as soon as possible.

## 5: Repairs, maintenance and improvements

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

- *tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.*

This **outcome** describes how landlords should meet their statutory duties on repairs and provide repairs, maintenance and improvement services that safeguard the value of their assets and take account of the wishes and preferences of their tenants. This could include setting repair priorities and timescales; setting repair standards such as getting repairs done right, on time, first time; and assessing tenant satisfaction with the quality of the services they receive.

## Neighbourhood and community

### 6: Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably possible that:

- *tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.*

This **outcome** covers a range of actions that social landlords can take on their own and in partnership with others. It covers action to enforce tenancy conditions on estate management and neighbour nuisance, to resolve neighbour disputes, and to arrange or provide tenancy support where this is needed. It also covers the role of landlords in working with others to tackle anti-social behaviour.

## Access to housing and support

### 7, 8 and 9: Housing options

Social landlords work together to ensure that:

- *people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them*
- *tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.*

Social landlords ensure that:

- *people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.*

These **outcomes** cover landlords' duties to provide information to people looking for housing and advice for those at risk of becoming homeless. This could include providing housing 'health checks' for tenants and people on housing lists to help them review their options to move within the social housing sector or to another sector.

### 10: Access to social housing

Social landlords ensure that:

- *people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and on their prospects of being housed.*

This **outcome** covers what social landlords can do to make it easy for people to apply for the widest choice of social housing that is available and suitable and that meets their needs. It includes actions that social landlords can take on their own and in partnership with others, for example through Common Housing Registers or mutual exchange schemes, or through local information and advice schemes.

## 11: Tenancy sustainment

Social landlords ensure that:

- *tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.*

This **outcome** covers how landlords on their own, or in partnership with others, can help tenants who may need support to maintain their tenancy. This includes tenants who may be at risk of falling into arrears with their rent, and tenants who may need their home adapted to cope with age, disability, or caring responsibilities.

## 12: Homeless people

Local councils perform their duties on homelessness so that:

- *homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.*

This **outcome** describes what councils should achieve by meeting their statutory duties to homeless people.

## Getting good value from rents and service charges

### 13: Value for money

Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that:

- *tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.*

This **standard** covers the efficient and effective management of services. It includes minimising the time houses are empty; managing arrears and all resources effectively; controlling costs; getting value out of contracts; giving better value for money by increasing the quality of services with minimum extra cost to tenants, owners and other customers; and involving tenants and other customers in monitoring and reviewing how landlords give value for money.

### 14 and 15: Rents and service charges

Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that:

- *a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them*
- *tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including details of any individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.*

These **outcomes** reflect a landlord's legal duty to consult tenants about rent setting; the importance of taking account of what current and prospective tenants and other customers are likely to be able to afford; and the importance that many tenants place on being able to find out how their money is spent. For local councils, this includes meeting the Scottish Government's guidance on housing revenue accounts. Each landlord must decide, in discussion with tenants and other customers, whether to publish information about expenditure above a particular level, and in what form and detail. What matters is that discussions take place and the decisions made reflect the views of tenants and other customers.

## Other customers

### 16: Gypsy/Travellers

Local councils and social landlords with responsibility for managing sites for Gypsy/Travellers should manage the sites so that:

- *sites are well maintained and managed, and meet the minimum site standards set in Scottish Government guidance.*

This **outcome** includes actions landlords take to ensure that: their sites meet the Scottish Government guidance on minimum standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites, and those living on such sites have occupancy agreements that reflect the rights and responsibilities set out in guidance.

All the standards and outcomes in the Charter apply to Gypsy/Travellers.

**Scottish Government**  
**April 2017**



## 3. A note about language

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We use some key phrases throughout the Charter, which we explain below.

### **Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, section 31**

Section 31 of the Act says that:

‘Ministers must set out standards and outcomes which social landlords should aim to achieve when performing housing activities.

‘The document in which those standards and outcomes are set out is to be known as the “Scottish Social Housing Charter”.’

### **Long-term aims**

The Scottish Government has five long-term aims, known as the strategic objectives. Everything it does should contribute towards making Scotland:

- wealthier and fairer
- healthier
- safer and stronger
- smarter
- greener.

The Charter supports the aim of creating ‘A safer and stronger Scotland’.

### **Outcome**

- An outcome is a result we want to happen.
- The Charter sets out the results that a social landlord should achieve for its tenants and other customers.
- The Charter is not about what a landlord does or how it does it. It is about the customer’s experience of using a landlord’s services.

## **Scottish Housing Regulator**

The Regulator is the independent body that the Scottish Parliament created to look after the interests of people who are or may become homeless, tenants of social landlords, or users of the services that social landlords provide. The Regulator monitors, assesses, and reports on how landlords are performing against the Charter's outcomes and standards.

## **Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)**

The SHQS is the Scottish Government's main way of measuring the quality of social housing in Scotland.

## **Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)**

The EESH aims to improve social housing's energy efficiency in Scotland. It will help to reduce energy consumption, fuel poverty and greenhouse gas emissions. The standard will also contribute to reducing carbon emissions by 42% by 2020, and 80% by 2050, in line with what's required by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

## **Social housing**

Housing provided by councils and housing associations under a Scottish Secure Tenancy or Short Scottish Secure Tenancy.

## **Social landlord**

- A council landlord.
- A not-for-profit landlord, registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator (for example, a housing association, or co-operative).
- A council that does not own any housing but provides housing services, for example services for homeless people.

## **Stakeholder**

A person or organisation with an interest in social housing and the way it is regulated. The following are some examples of stakeholders:

- The Scottish Housing Regulator.
- Tenants of social landlords and bodies representing their interests.
- Homeless people and bodies representing their interests.
- Users of housing services provided by social landlords and bodies representing the interests of those users.
- Social landlords and bodies representing their interests.
- Secured creditors of registered social landlords and bodies representing those secured creditors.
- The Accounts Commission for Scotland.
- The Equalities and Human Rights Commissions and other bodies representing equal opportunities interests.

## **Standard**

A level of quality that every social landlord should achieve.

## **Tenants and other customers**

- People who are already tenants of a social landlord.
- People who may become tenants in the future – for example, someone who has applied for a tenancy.
- Homeless people.
- People who use the housing services provided by a social landlord – for example, home owners who pay a social landlord to provide a factoring service, or Gypsy/Travellers who use sites provided by a social landlord.



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