

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by the Chief Officer, Housing and Employability****Housing and Communities Committee: 22 November 2023**

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**Subject: Scottish Social Housing Charter/Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland Progress Report**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide members with a mid-year update in terms of how we are performing against the Scottish Social Housing Charter indicators and to provide an update into how we are meeting the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Housing and Communities Committee:

- (i) Notes the contents of this report recognising the mid-year progress in terms of meeting the Outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter;
- (ii) Notes that following the approval of our Annual Assurance Statement by the Committee on 25 October 2023 that this has now been submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator as per our regulatory requirement;
- (iii) Notes that our annual Charter Performance Report has now been published and a summary will be provided to all tenants with the winter edition of the Housing News; and
- (iv) Notes that a full annual progress report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter will be submitted to the August 2024 meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee this will include our Annual Assurance Statement.

**3. Background**

- 3.1** The Scottish Government's first Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) came into force in April 2012. This was reviewed during 2016 and again in 2021 and the resulting revised SSHC was subsequently approved by the Scottish Parliament and has effect from 1 November 2022.
- 3.2** The purpose of the SSHC is to help improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide 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; and

- Providing the basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) to assess and report on how well landlords are performing.

**3.3** A revised Regulatory Framework and reporting timetable for the SSHC came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 is outlined below:

When	Who	What
Throughout year	Housing Services /Tenants	Assess performance against the Charter Outcomes
May each year	Housing Development	Submission of Annual Return on the Charter to Scottish Housing Regulator
August each year	Scottish Housing Regulator	Publishes a report about each social landlord with key data from its ARC on their website
October each year	Convener of Housing and Communities Committee	Submission of Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator
October each year	Housing Development	Publication of annual Charter Performance Report for tenants and other customers
by April each year	Scottish Housing Regulator	Publish an Engagement Plan for each landlord, based on performance against Charter Indicators and outcomes
by April each year	Scottish Housing Regulator	Publish a report on the analysis of the sector's performance in achieving the Charter outcomes

**3.4** On the 6 August 2014, Members of the Housing and Communities Committee agreed that twice yearly reports be provided as follows:

- August Committee - Scottish Social Housing Charter Annual Update Report; and
- November Committee - Scottish Social Housing Charter Annual Benchmarking Report and Mid-Year Progress Report – (April-September).

**3.5** As our AAS needs to be approved by the Committee and submitted to the SHR by 31 October each year, a special meeting of the Committee was arranged on 25 October 2023 to ensure that we met this timescale. It was agreed that a further progress report with a mid-year update would be provided to the November 2023 Committee meeting.

## **4. Main Issues**

**4.1** The key areas of focus in relation to the SSHC highlighted in this report are as follows:

- Mid-year progress in relation to how well we are achieving the Charter Outcomes;
- An update on the submission of our AAS to the SHR; and
- An update on the publication of our annual Charter Performance Report for tenants and other customers.







## Mid-year progress achieving the Charter Outcomes











- 4.2** The SHR now uses 32 Charter Performance Indicators to monitor the performance of all social landlords against the Charter outcomes and standards.
- 4.3** A comprehensive assessment of 2022/23 performance against the Charter has been carried out which informed a Charter Improvement Plan which is being implemented across all areas of the housing service with the objective of continuing to improve services for our tenants and customers.
- 4.4** Based on this exercise and the content of our most recent Engagement Plan, the HIB is monitoring on a monthly basis key work-streams aimed at driving improvements in the following areas:
- Compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS);
  - Services for people who are homeless, including breaches of the UAO;
  - Tenant satisfaction;
  - Void management; and
  - Complaints response times.
- 4.5** Detailed benchmarking was provided to the HACC on 25 October 2023 and the table below provides a more local analysis comparing West Dunbartonshire Council's performance against comparable neighbouring housing organisations (3 neighbouring local authorities Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire and Stirling and River Clyde Homes operating in Inverclyde).

Indicator	West Dunbartonshire Council	East Dunbartonshire Council	Renfrewshire Council	Stirling Council	River Clyde Homes
<b>HOMES AND RENT</b>					
Total Number of Homes					
	10,422	3,725	12,216	6,035	6,140
Rent increase					
	5.0%	4.2%	5.5%	2.9%	5.0%
<b>TENANT SATISFACTION</b>					
% of overall satisfaction with the service					
	61.3%	75.9%	82.4%	90.9%	91.3%
% of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services					
	75.8%	82.6%	91.1%	98.4%	96.2%
% of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to participate in decision making					
	69.2%	78.9%	99.0%	97.5%	94.9%
<b>QUALITY AND MAINTENANCE OF HOMES</b>					
% of homes meeting the SHQS					
	32.2%	53.5%	67.9%	87.0%	79.2%
Emergency Repairs - average number of hours					
	4.5 hours	4.0 hours	9.8 hours	7.4 hours	3.1 hours

Non-Emergency Repairs - average number of days					
	9.3 days	11.7 days	6.1 days	6.6 days	10.3 days
Repairs – Right First Time					
	85.7%	81.9%	90.0%	92.2%	86.7%
% of tenants who have had repairs carried out on the last 12 months who were satisfied with repairs and maintenance service					
	87.3%	91.6%	73.3%	88.1%	92.2%
Indicator	West Dunbartonshire Council	East Dunbartonshire Council	Renfrewshire Council	Stirling Council	River Clyde Homes
NEIGHBOURHOODS					
% of anti-social behaviour cases resolved within locally agreed targets in the last year					
	97.1%	100%	98.0%	84.6%	95.9%
VALUE FOR MONEY					
Rent collected as % of rent due					
	98.5%	99.0%	100.0%	99.9%	97.8%
% of Rent due not collected through homes being empty					
	1.3%	1.0%	1.9%	1.5%	4.8%
Average length of time in days taken to re-let homes in the last year					
	33.6 days	59.5 days	60.6 days	76.9 days	209.9 days







- 4.6** Performance improvement targets for 2023/24 for all the Charter Indicators have been agreed based on robust benchmarking information and previous performance. These targets challenge the housing service to meet our ambition to be one of Scotland's top performing landlord organisations.
- 4.7** Of the 32 Charter Indicators, 10 are reported on a six monthly basis to the Housing and Communities Committee, alongside 3 indicators relating to homelessness (which are not currently part of the Charter return).
- 4.8** A summary of performance for the period April 2023 – September 2023 for these indicators is outlined in the table below:

Status Key			Scottish Social Housing Charter Mid-year Performance Report (Apr 2023 – Sep 2023)		
 Target Met or exceeded	 Target narrowly missed (within agreed range)	 Target missed			
Estate Management, Anti-Social Behaviour, Neighbour Nuisance and Tenancy Disputes			Mid-year Target	Mid-year Value	Status
% of anti-social behaviour cases resolved			91%	91.5%	
Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements			Mid-year Target	Mid-year Value	Status
Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs			6 hours	5.35 hours	
Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs			8.4 days	11.8 days	

% of reactive repairs carried out completed right first time	90%	85.6%	
How many times in the reporting period did you not complete a gas safety check within 12 months	0	0	
% of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service	86%	99.6%	
<b>Value for Money</b>	<b>Mid-year Target</b>	<b>Mid-year Value</b>	<b>Status</b>
Average time to re-let properties	30 days	45 days	
% of rent due lost through homes being empty during the last year	1.0%	1.08%	
Gross rent arrears as a % of total rent due	10.0%	9.84%	
<b>Tenancy Sustainability</b>	<b>Mid-year Target</b>	<b>Mid-year Value</b>	<b>Status</b>
% of new tenants who maintained their tenancy for at least 12 months	94%	94.6%	
<b>Homeless People</b>	<b>Mid-year Target</b>	<b>Mid-year Value</b>	<b>Status</b>
% of all homeless cases who received a decision within 28 day target	95%	99.2%	
% of households requiring temporary accommodation, to whom an offer was made	100%	100%	
Breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order	0	60	

**4.9** Of these 13 key indicators, 8 are meeting the targets set, with another 2 narrowly missing this target. Overall this translates to 77% of these key indicators either meeting or almost achieving target.

**4.10** Whilst not usually reported on a six monthly basis to Committee, given that they are a key area of focus for the Housing Improvement Board, the table below gives an update in terms of performance on complaints response times and on compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard:

Status Key			Scottish Social Housing Charter Mid-year Performance Report (Apr 2023 – Sep 2023)		
 Target Met or exceeded	 Target narrowly missed (within agreed range)	 Target missed			
<b>Communication</b>			<b>Mid-year Target</b>	<b>Mid-year Value</b>	<b>Status</b>
Average time in working days to respond to a Stage 1 complaint			5 days	6 days	
Average time in working days to respond to a Stage 2 complaint			20 days	11 days	
<b>Quality of housing</b>			<b>Mid-year Target</b>	<b>Mid-year Value</b>	<b>Status</b>
% of properties compliant with Scottish Housing Quality Standard			69%	42.5%	

### Annual Assurance Statement (AAS)

- 4.11** The AAS requires landlords to state they are meeting regulatory requirements and that they are compliant with the legal requirements and statutory guidance relevant to the sector. Any areas of material non-compliance should be highlighted, alongside actions being taken to address these.
- 4.12** As reported to the special meeting of the HACC on 25 October 2023, we have highlighted the following areas in this years' AAS:
- Low level of compliance with SHQS;
  - Low levels of tenant satisfaction; and
  - Reported breaches of the UAO
- 4.13** Following the approval by the special meeting of the HACC of the content of our AAS, it was signed by the Convener on behalf of the Committee and submitted to the SHR as per the regulatory requirement.
- 4.14** As per the SHR guidance, our AAS will be published to ensure that it is accessible to tenants and other customers.

### Charter Performance Report

- 4.15** The SHR requires all social landlords to produce an Annual Charter Performance Report for their tenants and other customers no later than 31 October each year.
- 4.16** The statutory regulatory framework states that that this report should include:
- An assessment of performance in delivering the Charter Outcomes;
  - Relevant comparisons with previous years, other landlords and national performance; and
  - How and when the landlord intends to address areas for improvement.
- 4.17** In preparation for our first report in 2014, a working group of tenants and officers was established and successfully:
- Agreed how tenants wished to be involved;
  - Agreed which indicators will feature in the report; and
  - Agreed the best style and format to ensure that the report is user friendly and easy to understand.
- 4.18** Further engagement was carried out with tenant representatives during 2019 to review and update this report, in line with the revised Charter coming into effect. This consultation influenced the style, content and format of our Annual Charter Report and also the update of the Service Standards that are in place across housing services and which are reported regularly to tenants and other service users (via the Council website and by a performance insert provided with Housing News).

- 4.19** This years' report was published online within the required timescale. The narrative in the report is based on the annual self-assessment exercise of our performance and a summary of the report will be sent to every tenant with the winter edition of the Housing News.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no people implications as a result of the report. Delivery on the requirements of the SSHC is managed from within existing staffing resources within the Housing Development Team.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** There are no direct financial or procurement implications in relation to this report. The improvement plan informed by the Charter self-assessment exercise will be delivered from within existing budgets.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** There is a significant risk that failure to respond appropriately to the requirements of the SSHC would attract an adverse reaction from the SHR and may have wider consequences for the Council in the context of Best Value.
- 7.2** At the time of writing we expect our next Engagement Plan to be published in March 2024.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** Equalities legislation requires that new or significantly changing policies or services and financial decisions should be subject to an assessment of their impact on the wellbeing of certain groups of people. The recommendations within this report do not alter any existing policy or pattern of service delivery and so is not considered to require an equalities impact assessment.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** The Council has in place a well-established and proactive tenants and residents organisational structure. The WDTRG meet with the Council (chaired by the Convener of the Housing and Communities Committee) on a bi-monthly basis to discuss all issues relating to the Housing Service.
- 9.2** There remains a strong appetite among tenants and customers to continue to participate actively to improve housing services in West Dunbartonshire. This is reflected in the successful partnership approach adopted to develop the Charter Performance Report and the on-going activities of the WDTRG, the Joint Rent Group and the West Dunbartonshire Scrutiny Panel.
- 9.3** The Council is committed to ensure effective consultation continues and will support arrangements to increase tenant scrutiny activities and assess our performance in line with the statutory requirements under the SSHC and the

SHR's regulatory framework. Our approach was again commended via an external validation exercise by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Scotland, which again awarded West Dunbartonshire Council a Gold Accreditation for excellence in tenant participation in early 2023.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1** Having considered the Council's strategic priorities, this report contributes significantly to all five strategic priorities and specifically to improve local housing and environmentally sustainable infrastructure.

**Peter Barry**  
**Chief Officer, Housing and Employability**  
**Date: 8 November 2023**

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**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** [Scottish Housing Regulator WDC Landlord Report 2022-23](#)  
[West Dunbartonshire Council | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)

WDC Annual Assurance Statement October 2023

Annual Charter Performance Report for Tenants and other Customers 2022/23, West Dunbartonshire Council, October 2023

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/our-performance/service-performance/housing-services-performance-information/charter-performance-report/>

West Dunbartonshire Tenant Participation Strategy 2021-2024  
“Involving You”

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/housing/tenant-participation-strategy/>

Scottish Social Housing Charter – West Dunbartonshire Council Annual Assurance Statement, Report by Chief Officer, Housing and Employability, Housing and Communities Committee, 25 October 2023

**Wards Affected:** All