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To: Councillor Radley, Convener; Councillor Henrickson, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Bouse, Cross, Davidson, Graham, McLellan, Mrs Stewart and Watson.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 19 May 2025

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Members of the **COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in **Committee Room 2 - Town House** on **TUESDAY, 27 MAY 2025 at 10.00 am**. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream can be viewed on the Council's website.
<https://aberdeen.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

ALAN THOMSON
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER – GOVERNANCE

B U S I N E S S

DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1. There are no items of urgent business at this time.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. Determination of Exempt Business

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest or connections.

REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION

4. There are no requests for deputation at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting of 11 March 2025 (Pages 5 - 16)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6. Committee Business Planner (Pages 17 - 22)

NOTICES OF MOTION

7. None at this time

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

8. There are no reports under this heading

PUBLIC PROTECTION

- 9.1. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report- SFR/25/115 (Pages 23 - 42)
- 9.2. Police Scotland Crime Prevention Thematic Report - POL/25/116 (Pages 43 - 50)
- 9.3. Police Scotland Thematic Report - Wilful Fireraising - POL/25/117 (Pages 51 - 60)
- 9.4. Police Scotland Thematic Report - Community Safety Dog Related Incidents - POL/25/118 (Pages 61 - 68)
- 9.5. Building Standards Activity Report - CR&E/25/114 (Pages 69 - 74)
- 9.6. Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2025-26 - CORS/25/026 (Pages 75 - 112)
- 9.7. Protective Services Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service Plan 2025/26 - CORS/25/058 (Pages 113 - 128)

FINANCE, PERFORMANCE, RISK AND SERVICE WIDE ISSUES

- 10.1. Performance Report - CORS/25/095 (Pages 129 - 152)

COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING

- 11.1. Affordable Housing - F&C/25/120 (Pages 153 - 158)
- 11.2. Housing Bi Annual Report - F&C/25/119 (Pages 159 - 286)
- 11.3. Viability Assessment of Proposals from Owners of Properties with RAAC - F&C/25/124 (Pages 287 - 352)

Integrated Impact Assessments related to reports on this agenda can be viewed [here](#)

To access the Service Updates for this Committee please click [here](#)

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Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee

ABERDEEN, 11 March 2025. Minute of Meeting of the COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Radley, Convener; Councillor Henrickson, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Bouse, Cross, Davidson, Graham, McLellan, Tissera (as substitute for Councillor Watson for item 12) and Watson (for all items except item 12).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located here [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DEPUTATION REQUESTS - ITEM 11.1 - REINFORCED AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE (RAAC)

1. The Committee received two deputation requests in relation to item 11.1 on the agenda (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) - Phasing of Demolition and Landscaping).

The first deputation request was from Mr John Meiklejohn, who represented the Torry Community RAAC Campaign Group. Mr Meiklejohn explained that he would like the Council to reverse the opinion that planning permission did not require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before demolition of the properties and asked that this be re-evaluated and also asked that there be involvement of an established environment agency such as SEPA. Mr Meiklejohn felt that by not having an EIA, it would then skip a major part of the planning process for this development. Mr Meiklejohn highlighted that the proposal was to demolish 372 buildings and that would have an impact on the environment.

Mr Meiklejohn also highlighted that he wished to thank the Council for agreeing to explore alternatives to support homeowners and he felt this was a big step forward and felt that it was leeway to get both sides out of the messy situation. He also indicated that he did appreciate the Council's record of trying to balance professionalism with empathy however he felt that section 7 of the report (legal implications) undermined that. He felt that it was a blatant threat and an attempt to intimidate people into accepting the voluntary acquisition process and also an attempt to remove the need for the CPO? process by simply threatening to evict homeowners from their properties.

Mr Meiklejohn highlighted he felt there was conflicting information on whether RAAC was defective and he felt there was a strong parallel with the cladding scandal in terms of the information that had not been provided. He felt that this would be made clear through a statutory public enquiry. He advised that he felt the only way to get a fair, true and transparent process to determine not only the responsibilities but the root cause of this scandal and get it properly resolved in a fair and equitable manner, was to have a public enquiry.

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

Mr Meiklejohn advised that they had specialists in the area of structural engineering and structural architects who all stated that homeowners had been put in a position of facing huge bills, financial difficulties and possibly homelessness through no fault of their own.

Mr Meiklejohn spoke about the health impact the situation was having on privately owned residents who were affected by RAAC and asked that private owners be awarded a fair settlement. Mr Meiklejohn indicated that owners did not want to go through a long legal battle and sought a fair resolution. He advised that he would not accept the valuation that had been offered from the Council.

Members then had the opportunity to ask Mr Meiklejohn questions on his deputation.

The Committee then received a deputation from Mr Wilson Chowdhry. Mr Chowdhry began his deputation by asking if the Council believed that due diligence had been adequately undertaken in regards to the RAAC home owners' situation and whether the correct financial model had been followed. He noted that at a previous meeting, officers explained that only desktop reviews had been conducted in regards to cost repairs across Scotland and noted that thorough cost assessments had led to significant reductions in estimated replacement costs.

In regards to the Environmental Impact Assessment, Mr Chowdhry asked for clarity on why the Council believed an EIA was not required for this project.

Mr Chowdhry explained that in regards to exploring viable alternatives, section 2.1 of the report stated that the plans could still be adapted and that engagement with homeowners would continue. He indicated that Dundee City Council were set to announce a 40% grant to all owners, for RAAC replacement costs.

Mr Chowdhry asked that the Council provide a fair solution for affected homeowners and felt that if this was the case, it would cost the Council less overall than demolition and redevelopment, and also reduce the loss of crucial housing stock.

In regards to the demolition programme at 2.4 of the report, Mr Chowdhry advised that the Council acknowledged that the demolition programme was subject to interdependencies which could delay proceedings, and he urged the Council to recognise that a significant majority of home owners were refusing to accept the voluntary acquisition offers.

Mr Chowdhry indicated that it was widely recognised that the current situation was not the homeowners' fault, but rather a consequence of past cost saving measures, during the construction of these properties. In relation to the acquisition processes, Mr Chowdhry formally requested an amendment to reinstate verbal reporting on rehoming numbers at future Committee meetings.

In relation to section 3.3 of the report, Mr Chowdhry advised that it was acknowledged that some properties within the wider site were privately owned and that affected

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

homeowners could pursue their own solutions. He felt the Council had failed to inform these homeowners that they could submit group applications for available financial assistance including loans, shared funding or grants for remedial works to their properties.

Mr Chowdhry highlighted that it was worth noting that none of the properties classified as medium to high risk had progressed to critical risk and felt that it suggested that the Council's actions thus far had been premature and rushed. He called on the Council to pause its current demolition and acquisition plans and instead focus on properly exploring all viable alternatives, as other local authorities had done.

Members were then given the opportunity to ask Mr Chowdhry questions on his deputation.

The Committee resolved:-

to thank Mr Meiklejohn and Mr Chowdhry for their deputations.

MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF 14 JANUARY 2025

2. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 14 January 2025, for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

3. The Committee had before it the committee business planner, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

At this juncture, Councillor Graham, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved a procedural motion:-

to continue to receive verbal updates in regards to items 13, 18, 27 and 35 and not to remove them from the planner, all of which related to RAAC.

On a division, there voted – for the procedural motion (3) – Councillors Cross, Graham and Watson – against the procedural motion (5) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Bouse, Davidson and McLellan.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to reject the procedural motion and therefore agree to remove items 13, 18, 27 and 35 (all related to verbal updates in regards to RAAC);
- (ii) to note that item 5 (Residential Caravan Licensing) was transferred to this Committee from the Licensing Committee;

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

- (iii) to note the reasons for delay for items 29 (Cost Neutral Environmental Enforcement) and 36 (Review of the Non Traditional Housing Stock); and
- (iv) to otherwise note the committee business planner.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE THEMATIC REPORT - SPECIAL SERVICE GAINING ENTRY INCIDENTS IN ABERDEEN CITY - SFR/25/068

4. The Committee had before it a report by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), which presented the current figures for Special Service Gaining Entry Incidents in Aberdeen City and to highlight the additional work now undertaken by the SFRS within Aberdeen City in line with the current objectives contained within the Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee consider and note the performance data provided within the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Thematic Report, Special Service Gaining Entry Incidents in Aberdeen City, at appendix A.

The Committee heard from Andrew Wright, Local Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered various questions from Members.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP SYSTEM AWARENESS - CORS/25/039

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance, which provided the Committee with an update on the current efforts undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership to manage antisocial behaviour in the city centre, as well as to enhance the wider system's awareness. The report also detailed the existing operational framework and functions of the Community Safety Partnership. By outlining the mechanisms and strategies in place, the report aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of the partnership's role in promoting community safety and public protection.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee notes the update from the Community Safety Partnership including the multi agency governance model and the collaborative approach between various agencies and stakeholders.

The Committee heard from Mark Wilson, Community Safety and City Warden Manager, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered questions from Members.

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to commend Council officers for advising on and raising awareness of the multi-agency governance model operating in Aberdeen and for highlighting insights into the collaborative approach taken between various agencies and stakeholders in the city;
- (ii) to agree that information could usefully be provided to Members on which agencies and organisations made up the Community Safety Partnership, how often they met, and what their current over-arching combined strategic priorities were;
- (iii) to note efforts to formalise a Community Safety Partnership Board, made up of representatives from public, private and 3rd sector organisations, tasked with agreeing high level strategic goals, an action plan, and using the operational framework and functions already in place as outlined in this report and ask for input from partners involved in Community Planning Aberdeen to this process; and
- (iv) to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Governance to report back to the most relevant meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on the outcome from 3 above.

RESILIENCE ANNUAL REPORT - CORS/25/014

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance, which provided the annual assurance report on the Council's resilience arrangements in fulfilment of its duties as a Category one responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) notes the progress made in further embedding the Council's resilience arrangements during another busy year for emergency response; and
- (b) notes the updated Generic Emergency Plan which had received minor alterations under the relevant delegated powers.

The Committee heard from Fiona Mann, Emergency Plan, Resilience and Civic Lead, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered various questions from Members.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023-24 - ACHSCP/25/040

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership, which presented the Justice Social Work Service Annual Performance Report for 2023-24 in line with the Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee's remit.

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

The report recommended:-

that the Committee notes the Justice Social Work Service Annual Performance Report 2023-24 (at Appendix 1), which provided assurance about progress made over the period.

The Committee heard from Val Vertigans, Strategic Service Manager, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered questions from Members.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

PERFORMANCE REPORT - CORS/25/033

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Data Insights, which presented Committee with the status of appropriate key performance measures relating to services falling within its remit.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report Appendix.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that information on written off debt in regards to rent would be included in the next Housing Bi Annual report;
- (ii) to note that the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord would liaise with colleagues in Waste Management in regards to campaigns currently being run regarding fly tipping and if anything further could be done to help prevent fly tipping, as well as further engagement with residents in multi storey blocks; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the Performance Report.

REINFORCED AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE (RAAC) - PHASING OF DEMOLITION AND LANDSCAPING - CR&E/25/057

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officers – Capital, Housing and Corporate Landlord, which advised that at the Council meeting of 21 August 2024, the Council considered the findings from an options appraisal of various RAAC mitigation actions and agreed that the optimum option was the demolition and rebuild of homes on site. There was an instruction for the Chief Officer - Capital to proceed with the demolition aspect of this, and report back to the next appropriate meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on the proposed initial phasing of demolition and landscape details. This report outlined the proposed initial phasing of demolition and landscaping.

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

Council also instructed the Chief Officer - Capital, following consultation with the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee, and the Chief Officer - Procurement, to procure appropriate works and services, and enter into any contracts necessary for the delivery of the demolition, masterplanning and landscaping works without the need for further approval from any other Committee of the Council subject to due diligence, consistency with the financial model and affordability and regular update on progress of project delivery to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee. This report provided an update on that instruction.

Finally at the meeting of 5th February 2025, Council noted the alternative options proposed by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee and instructed officers to explore the feasibility, benefits and risks associated with each option, alongside any other identified opportunities to support owners, and report the findings to a future meeting of the Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee. The recommendations in this report reflected the flexibility required to both respond to the instruction from the 21st August 2024 around demolition and landscaping and fully explore the viability of options with the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee

- (a) note that officers continue to try and find the balance between applying our professionalism to the workstreams associated with the Council's response to the discovery of RAAC in properties and our empathy for those tenants and homeowners, in particular affected by the discovery of RAAC in their homes. The proposed plans included within this report will continue to adapt in light of changing circumstances. Throughout the process officers will continue to endeavour to respond to the needs of residents and homeowners wherever possible;
- (b) note that AtkinsRéalis have been procured to manage and deliver the demolition phase;
- (c) approve the indicative demolition proposals and sequence of phases, noting that only vacant terraces/blocks will be demolished;
- (d) agree that to deliver the demolition in the indicative sequence there are interdependencies on items such as utility disconnections, property ownership and asbestos surveys. As a result, the indicative sequence may be subject to change and will not commence until all interdependencies are resolved;
- (e) note the budget in relation to RAAC at Balnagask forms part of the Council budget held on Wednesday 5 March 2025;
- (f) agree that any changes to the indicative phases of demolition be shared with Elected Members via a Service Update and of course, with the affected communities;
- (g) approve the 'Demolition Engagement Plan' as shown in Appendix F;
- (h) note the landscaping options available in Appendix E and instructs the Chief Officer Capital to engage with the community on the landscaping options;
- (i) instruct Chief Officers Housing, Capital and Corporate Landlord to consider the landscaping options more fully when they report back to Committee on the

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

- outcomes of the viability of the alternative options presented by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee; and
- (j) agree that no more verbal reports are required to be presented by the Chief Officer – Housing at this Committee, regarding rehoming numbers, given the current stage of delivery.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-
that the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report.

Councillor Watson, seconded by Councillor Graham, moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee

1. note that officers continue to try and find the balance between applying our professionalism to the workstreams associated with the Council's response to the discovery of RAAC in properties and our empathy for those tenants and homeowners, in particular affected by the discovery of RAAC in their homes. The proposed plans included within this report will continue to adapt in light of changing circumstances. Throughout the process officers will continue to endeavour to respond to the needs of residents and homeowners wherever possible;
2. note that Atkins Réalis have been procured to manage and deliver the demolition phase and calls for future works / contracts to be procured through an open tender procurement process;
3. instruct that no further work is progressed on the indicative demolition proposals and sequence of phases, until:
 - The Committee are satisfied as to the health and safety implications
 - A full Environmental Impact Assessment is carried out and reported back to this Committee.
 - There is a full report to this Committee on the RAAC campaign group's proposals
 - All cost implications of the full demolition process are presented to this Committee.
 - the Chief Officer – Capital investigates whether any damage was caused to the existing roofs when the 'Mansard Roof' works were carried out and what (if any) contractual liabilities exist, and reports back to this Committee with his findings.
 - A legal opinion is provided or obtained, as detailed below;
4. note the funding mechanism in relation to RAAC at Balnagask formed part of the Council budget agreed on Wednesday 5 March 2025;
5. note the 'Proposed Demolition Engagement Plan' as shown in Appendix F;
6. note the landscaping options available in Appendix E and instructs the Chief Officer - Capital to engage with the community on the landscaping options;
7. instructs the Chief Officers Housing, Capital and Corporate Landlord to consider the landscaping options more fully when they report back to this Committee on the outcomes of the consideration of the viability of the

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

- alternative options presented by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee;
8. instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Governance to provide or obtain a legal opinion on any legal duty the Council may have had to disclose the presence of RAAC or problems associated with RAAC when the council houses were sold by the Council under Right to Buy;
 9. instruct the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee, to write to the Scottish Government requesting they obtain permission from the UK Government around fiscal flexibility in order that the Council may have the option of being able to borrow for revenue purposes to fully compensate RAAC owners; and
 10. agree that written reports are to be presented by the Chief Officer – Housing at each meeting of this Committee, regarding rehoming numbers, given the current stage of delivery.

On a division, there voted – for the motion (5) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Bouse, Davidson and McLellan – for the amendment (3) – Councillors Cross, Graham and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer – Housing was currently working on literature in regards to the establishment of a local service for assisting individuals affected by RAAC and this would be shared with the Torry Community RAAC Campaign Group in due course;
- (ii) to note that an update would be circulated to Members via the clerk from the Chief Officer – Finance in relation to any update with the request for fiscal flexibility from the UK Government;
- (iii) to note that details on acceptable level of vibrations during demolition would be included in the tender documents;
- (iv) to request that the Executive Director – Families and Communities, provide an update to Members via the clerk in regards to the workshop to be held with affected residents; and
- (v) to adopt the motion, therefore approve the recommendations in the report.

RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN SITE LICENSING RENEWAL - CORS/25/034

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance, which noted that at the Council meeting on 17 April 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Governance to report back to the Licensing Committee outlining additional site licence conditions as necessary and required, as a result of residential caravan site licence renewal inspections. However it was felt that the report fell under the Terms of Reference for this Committee rather than Licensing Committee.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee -

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

- (a) note the work carried out by Environmental Health officers regarding the renewal of the site licenses of seven residential caravan sites within Aberdeen City;
- (b) note that these seven residential caravan sites have successfully had their licenses renewed for the next five years; and
- (c) note the additional site license conditions in the renewed licenses.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

DRAFT ABERDEEN LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY - F&C/25/043

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Housing, which sought permission to consult with the public and key stakeholders on the draft Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy as found in Appendix 1 to the report.

It was noted that as per the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, when required to do so by the Scottish Ministers, a local authority must prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The LHS set out the strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services over a 5 year period.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the draft Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy in Appendix 1;
- (b) approve the minor changes made to the seven strategic priorities following further analysis of data, consideration of research, and engagement with partners and stakeholders as outlined at paragraph 3.8;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to consult with the public and key stakeholders on the draft Local Housing Strategy between 24 March 2025 and 18 May 2025, as outlined at paragraphs 3.11 – 3.20, including academics linked to the Health Determinants Research Collaboration; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to report the findings of the consultation, alongside a revised Local Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan which would be updated to incorporate any necessary changes following the review of the consultation responses, to the August meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee for formal approval and implementation.

The Committee heard from Mel Booth, Senior Housing Strategy Officer, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered questions from Members.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-

That the Committee approve the recommendations contained in the report.

Councillor Graham, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee -

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

1. instructs the Chief Officer – Housing to include a section in the draft Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy on the housing emergency declared by Aberdeen City Council, detailing actions being taken and Smart Targets;
2. agree a key component missing from the draft Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy was how the Council worked in association with the Council acting as the Planning Authority and instructs the Chief Officer – Housing to include a section to reflect this;
3. agree that, if the Council wishes to move forward on its agenda of prevention and early intervention, it must fully grasp the need to be flexible on planning considerations especially for housing for those with disabilities or mental health problems and for bariatric care;
4. instructs the Convener of the Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee to write to the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, informing him of the Committee's view that the only way in which the objectives outlined within the draft Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy will become reality is if we all work together to bring the strategy to fruition;
5. instructs the Chief Officer - Housing to consult with the public and key stakeholders on the draft Local Housing Strategy between 24 March 2025 and 18 May 2025, as outlined at paragraphs 3.11 – 3.20, including academics linked to the Health Determinants Research Collaboration; and
6. instructs the Chief Officer - Housing to report the findings of the consultation, alongside a revised Local Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan which will be updated to incorporate any necessary changes following the review of the consultation responses, to the August meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee for formal approval and implementation.

On a division, there voted – for the motion (5) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Bouse, Davidson and McLellan – for the amendment (3) – Councillors Cross, Graham and Watson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion and therefore approve the recommendations.

At this juncture, Councillor Watson was replaced by Councillor Tissera.

RESETTLEMENT DELIVERY PLAN - F&C/25/050

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Housing, which sought approval for the Resettlement Delivery Plan as found in Appendix B.

The report recommended:-

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

11 March 2025

that the Committee –

- (a) note the analysis of Resettlement in Appendix A has informed the development of the draft Resettlement Delivery Plan;
- (b) approve the draft Resettlement Delivery Plan in Appendix B;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to seek feedback from key stakeholders including academics linked to the Health Determinates Research Collaboration in advance of refreshing the Resettlement Delivery Plan in 2026 and undertaking a wider analysis in 2027; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to report progress against the Plan, and any proposed changes to the Plan in light of changing circumstances, to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on a yearly basis.

The Committee heard from Gill Strachan, Intervention Hub Manager, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered questions from Members.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-

that the Committee approve the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Tissera, seconded by Councillor Graham, moved as an amendment:-

that the Committee –

1. note the analysis of Resettlement in Appendix A had informed the development of the draft Resettlement Delivery Plan;
2. approve the draft Resettlement Delivery Plan in Appendix B; where reasonably possible excluding the term “New Scots” which was not an inclusive term but a derogatory term given many, if not the majority, of people living in Scotland who had been forcibly displaced or were making a claim that they have a well-founded fear of persecution don’t see themselves as “New Scots” but come to and look to the United Kingdom to seek refuge; and
3. agree using the term “New Scots” detracts from the benefits which those from a culturally diverse society bring to Aberdeen, given the freedom of movement right across the UK, the clue being these refugees were here under the United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme, noting the Ethical Standards Commissioner found the use of the term in a particular context to be racist but on a hearing the Standards Commission found it was not.

On a division, there voted - for the motion (5) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Bouse, Davidson and McLellan – for the amendment (3) – Councillors Cross, Graham and Tissera.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion and therefore approve the recommendations.

- **COUNCILLOR MIRANDA RADLEY, Convener**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	COMMUNITIES HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3			27 May 2025						
4	Performance Report	The purpose of this report is to present Committee with the status of key performance measures relating to the Operations Directorate (non Education).		Louise Fox	Data Insight	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
5	Scottish Fire and Rescue Performance Report	To provide annual performance report for Scottish Fire and Rescue		Andy Wright	Scottish Fire and Rescue	SFRS	2.20		
6	Police Scotland Crime Prevention Thematic Report	To provide a report on crime prevention		Kate Stephen	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	2.20		
7	Police Scotland - Thematic Report - Wilful Fireraising	To provide a thematic report on Wilful Fireraising		Kate Stephen	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	2.20		
8	Police Scotland - Thematic Report - Community Safety – Dog Related Incidents	To provide a thematic report on Community Safety – Dog Related Incidents		Kate Stephen	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	2.20		
9	Housing Board Bi Annual report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back to this Committee bi-annual reports providing oversight on Housing Improvement Activity. Due to be reported November 2024 then May 2025.		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities	1.1.1		
10	Building Standards Activity Report	At the meeting on 21 November 2024, it was agreed to A to receive a further Building Standards Activity Report at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 27 May 2025.		Grant Tierney	Strategic Place Planning	City Regeneration & Environment	2.7 and 2.8		
11	Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2025-26	To seek approval for the Food Regulatory Service Plan 2025-26		Andrea Carson	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
12	Protective Services Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service Plan 2025/26	To seek approval for the Protective Services Occupational Health and Safety Intervention Plan		Alison Robertson	Governance	Corporate Services	2.3		
13	Affordable Housing Update	To provide an update on affordable housing		Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2									
14	Viability Assessment of Proposals from Owners of Properties with RAAC	At the Council meeting on 17 February 2025, it was agreed to note the alternative options proposed by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee and instruct officers to explore the feasibility, benefits and risks associated with each option, alongside any other identified opportunities to support owners, and report the findings to a future meeting of the Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee.		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
15			26 August 2025						
16	Performance Report	The purpose of this report is to present Committee with the status of key performance measures relating to the Operations Directorate (non Education).		Louise Fox	Data Insight	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
17	Police Scotland Performance Report 2024/25	To provide the performance report for 2024/25 from Police Scotland		Kate Stephen	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	2.20		
18	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)	At Council on 21 August 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, Chief Officer - Housing, and the Chief Officer - Finance, to assess the 'building new homes' option as alluded to in Option 4b with consideration towards undertaking a detailed masterplanning exercise assuming the site is vacant to determine future redevelopment proposals. For the wider site give consideration to creation of appropriate greenspace, preferred housing mix, opportunities to extend tenure mix and provision for housing for varying need and report this to a future meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in 2025 (as early as possible);		Jacqui McKenzie/ Stephen Booth/ Alan McKay/ Jonathan Belford	Various	Various			
19	Aberdeen Local Housing Strategy	Following consultation, the final Local Housing Strategy will be produced and published in Spring 2025.		Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
20	Strategic Housing Investment Plan	To approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.		Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
21	Cost Neutral Environmental Enforcement	At the meeting on 6 July 2023, the Committee resolved:(i) to agree the implementation of a 12-month pilot programme with the selected supplier for the enforcement of Littering, Dog Fouling and Fly Tipping legislation; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to monitor and evaluate the pilot and prepare a report for Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee on conclusion of the pilot in 2024.	The pilot commenced on 12 February 2025 and a report will be brought back end of 2025/ start of 2026	Mark Wilson	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.1 and 1.1.2		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
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2									
22	Annual Assurance Statement	Annual submission required to the Scottish Government Oct/Nov 2025		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
23	Rent Assistance Fund 2024/25	At the meeting on 28 March 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Finance to present a further evaluation covering the full 12 months of the pilot to be presented to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee after one full year of operation.		Jonathan Belford	Finance	Corporate Services	1.1.1		
24	Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Map Reporting 2025	To provide cluster risk registers and assurance maps.		Various	Various	Various	1.1.4		
25	Capital Programme Update	To provide an update in relation to the capital programme		Alan McKay	Capital	City Regeneration & Environment	1.1.1		
26			11 November 2025						
27	Performance Report	The purpose of this report is to present Committee with the status of key performance measures relating to the Operations Directorate (non Education).		Louise Fox	Data Insight	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
28	Review of the Non Traditional Housing Stock	At the meeting on 17 January 2023, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to review the HRA's non traditional housing stock to identify properties that will be unable to meet future environmental or other standards, identify a budget to undertake these inspections within the 2023/24 budget and report back to this Committee on progress in November 2023.	Consultation works on the future of the City centre multi's has been undertaken with excellent level of tenant and owners participation. Further works has not been progressed as staff time has been diverted to other RAAC related issue. We now anticipate that this work will be aligned to the Housing Asset Model/Plan.	Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
29	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	To provide a six monthly performance report		Andy Wright	Scottish Fire and Rescue	Scottish Fire and Rescue	2.20		
30	Housing Board Bi Annual Report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back to this Committee bi-annual reports providing oversight on Housing Improvement Activity.		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities	1.1.1		
31	Busking Code of Conduct	At the meeting on 5 September 2024, it was agreed to request that a report be brought back to this Committee in due course on how the Code of Conduct has worked following its implementation.		Mark Wilson	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.5		

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2									
32	Update on Consultation Exercise for City Centre Multi Storeys	At the meeting on 21 November 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to revisit the costs, risks and deliverable timescales for all options in an updated Business Case and to report this to a future meeting of this committee and to reflect the future risk and financial requirements for these buildings in the Housing Revenue Account budget process for 2025/26.		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
33			Future reports						
34	Grampian Joint Health Protection Plan	At the meeting on 30 May 2024 it was noted that the plan would be reviewed again in 2026.		Hazel Stevenson	Governance	Corporate Services	2.2		
35	Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy Update	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing in collaboration with the Chief Officer – Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, to report back to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee within 12 months on the implementation of the hybrid care and support model at Provost Hogg Court to evaluate the effectiveness before considering potential implementation in other parts of the city.		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
36	Anti Modern Slavery report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed that a report be brought back to this Committee in 2 years time, to provide an evaluation of the implementation of the statement.		Sandie Scott/ Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	GD 8.1		
37	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)	At Council on 21 August 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to continue the re-homing process and report progress to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on a regular basis, noting that there may be requirements to commence legal proceedings under the Scottish Tenancy Agreements, where tenants refused to move to alternative accommodation having received reasonable offers of alternative accommodation to ensure that tenant safety remains the Council's primary objective;		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities			
38	Housing (Scotland) Bill 2024	At the meeting on 5 September 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to provide a report or Service Update, as that Chief Officer deems appropriate, on the Bill as it progresses through Stage 2 of the parliamentary process; and to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to report to this Committee with a full Implementation Plan when the Bill has progressed through Stage 3 of the parliamentary process.		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities			

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
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2									
39	Housing (Cladding Remediation) (Scotland) Bill	To provide an update on the Housing (Cladding Remediation) (Scotland) Bill	This report will go as a service update as there isn't enough definitive detail around the implications of the change in legislation. A full report and implementation plan will go through Committee when the legislation is further through the parliamentary process.	Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities			
40	Aberdeen City's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2025/26 - 2029/30	At the meeting on 21 November 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to report back to Committee with the implications of the resource planning assumptions, when they were made available from Scottish Government as detailed at 3.5.		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1	R	This is incorporated in the housing bi annual report.
41	Resilience Annual report	Annual report to be submitted to CHPPC. Last one submitted March 2025 so likely March 2026.		Fiona Mann	Governance	Corporate Services	2.12		
42	Justice Social Work Service Annual Performance Report 2024-25	Annual report for Justice Social Work Performance. Reported in march 2025 so likely March 2026		Val Vertigans	AHSCP		2.1		
43	Resettlement Delivery Plan	At the meeting on 11 March 2025, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to report progress against the Plan, and any proposed changes to the Plan in light of changing circumstances, to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on a yearly basis. Likely March 2026		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1 and 1.1.15		
44	Community Safety Partnership System Awareness	At the meeting on 11 March 2025, it was agreed to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Governance to report back to the most relevant meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on the outcome of efforts to formalise the Community Safety Partnership Board.		Mark Wilson	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.1, 2.20 and 2.21		
45			Service Updates						
46	Family Support Model Implementation Plan	At the meeting on 21 November 2024, the Committee agreed to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to report back on progress within one calendar year and make any reports presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee available to members of Communities, Housing and Public Protection through a Service Update		Eleanor Sheppard	Families & Communities	Families & Communities			
47	Woolmanhill Hospital	At the meeting on 14 January 2025, the Committee agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to liaise with the developer around site security and development progress and to provide a service update to this Committee by August 2025		David Dunne	Strategic Place Planning	City Regeneration & Environment			

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2									
48	RAAC	At the meeting on 11 March 2025, it was agreed that any changes to the indicative phases of demolition be shared with Elected Members via a Service Update and of course, with the affected communities		Scott Whielaw	Capital	City Regeneration & Environment			
49	Annual Effectiveness Report	At the meeting on Council on 16 April 2025, it was agreed that Annual Effectiveness Report would now be a service update		Lynsey McBain	Governance	Corporate Services			

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	27 th of May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service End of Year Performance report 1 st April 2024 – 31 st March 2025 for Aberdeen City
REPORT NUMBER	SFR/25/115
DIRECTOR	Andrew Wright, Local Senior Officer, SFRS
CHIEF OFFICER	Andrew Wright, Local Senior Officer, SFRS
REPORT AUTHOR	Michael Rungay, Group Commander, SFRS
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.20

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The main purpose of this report is to present the end of year performance figures, from 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 of the SFRS against the current objectives contained within the Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee consider and note the performance data provided within the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service end of year performance report 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025. (Appendix A)

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 This report invites Committee members to review the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Aberdeen City Performance for the year 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025.
- 3.2 This report shows the progress being made by the SFRS locally against the priorities and objectives for Aberdeen City.
- 3.3 This report allows scrutiny from Local Authority Partners to ensure that the priorities of the SFRS Strategic Plan, and the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan are being delivered.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no significant financial implications for the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant legal implications for the Council.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 *Not applicable*

7. RISK

Not applicable

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk				Yes/No
Compliance				Yes/No
Operational				Yes/No
Financial				Yes/No
Reputational				Yes/No
Environment / Climate				Yes/No

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-2025</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	n/a
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Whilst not specific to any Stretch Outcome, the paper seeks contribution to fire safety which will assist achieve a safer place to live, work and visit.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following LOIP Stretch Outcomes

	11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Whilst not specific to any Stretch Outcome, the paper seeks contribution to fire safety which will assist achieve a safer place to live, work and visit.
Regional and City Strategies	n/a

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Not applicable

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 none

11. APPENDICES (if applicable)

11.1 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service –Thematic Report - Special Service Gaining Entry Incidents in Aberdeen City (Appendix A)

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Tel	07815161467

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Aberdeen City

**Communities, Housing and
Public Protection
Committee
2024-25**

Scrutiny Report



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**



Aberdeen City

Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

End of Year Performance Report

April 2024 - March 2025

Contents













1	Summary	Page 3
2	Trends	Page 4
3	Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)	Page 5
4	Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Page 6
5	Non-Fire Casualties	Page 7
6	Deliberate Fires	Page 8
7	Non-Domestic Fires	Page 9
8	Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)	Page 10
9	Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs)	Page 11
10	Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs)	Page 12
11	Fire Safety Enforcement	Page 12
12	Community Safety & Engagement	Page 13
13	Glossary of Terms	Page 14

About the statistics within this report

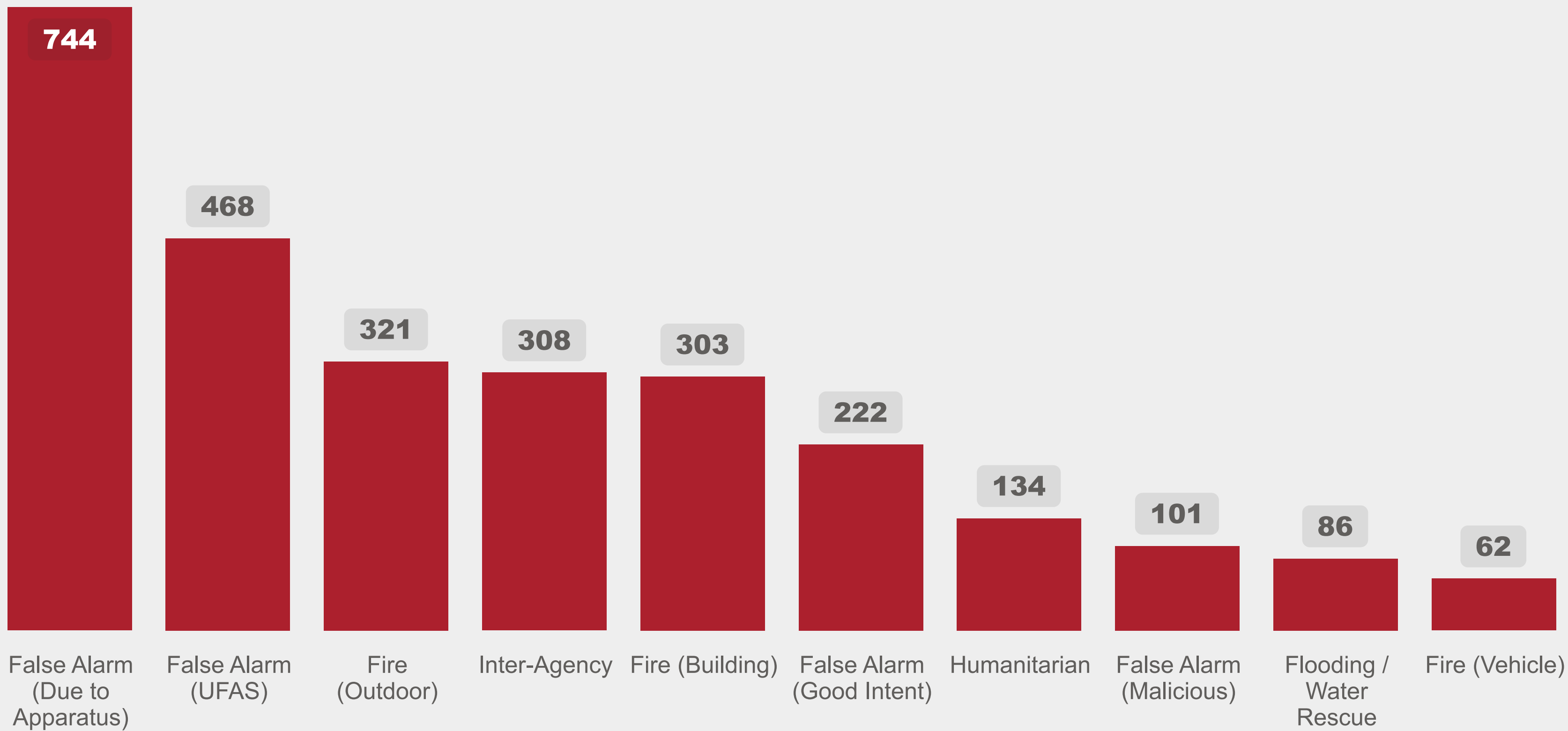
The activity totals and other statistics quoted within this report are published in the interests of transparency and openness. They are provisional in nature and subject to change as a result of ongoing quality assurance and review. Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be a difference in the period totals quoted in our reports after local publication which result from revisions or additions to the data in our systems. The Scottish Government publishes official statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

1. Summary

2024-25

 2,890 Total Incidents (Incl. Incompletes)	 686 Fires	 666 Non-Fire Incidents	 1,535 False Alarms	 468 UFAS
 182 People Rescued by Firefighters	 23 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Fires)	 3 Fire Fatalities	 40 People Receiving First Aid or Hospital Treatment (Non-Fire)	 8 Non-Fire Fatalities
 1,242 Home Fire Safety Visits	 364 Fire Safety Audits			

Top 10 Incident Types



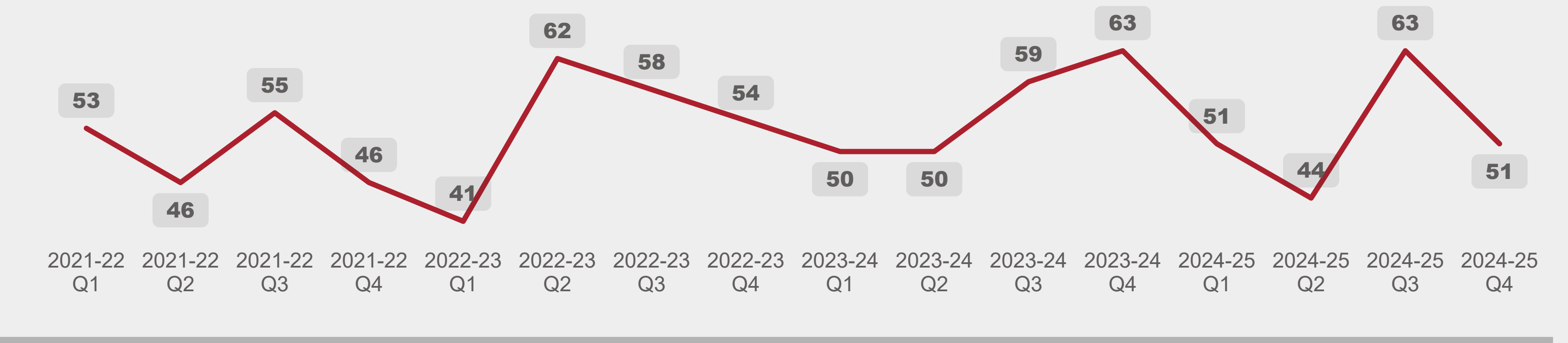
The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) attended 2890 incidents across the City of Aberdeen during the reporting period. Of that total 1535, over fifty percent, were False Alarm incidents. These include malicious, good intent, due to apparatus and Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS). This is down considerably on the period 2023-24 when there were 2275 False Alarm incidents. Our Operational personnel, Fire Safety Enforcement and Community Action Teams work with stakeholders to ensure that we are delivering fire safety advice to reduce false alarm incidents.

The SFRS attended 686 incidents involving fire over the reporting period, a reduction of 5% from the previous year.

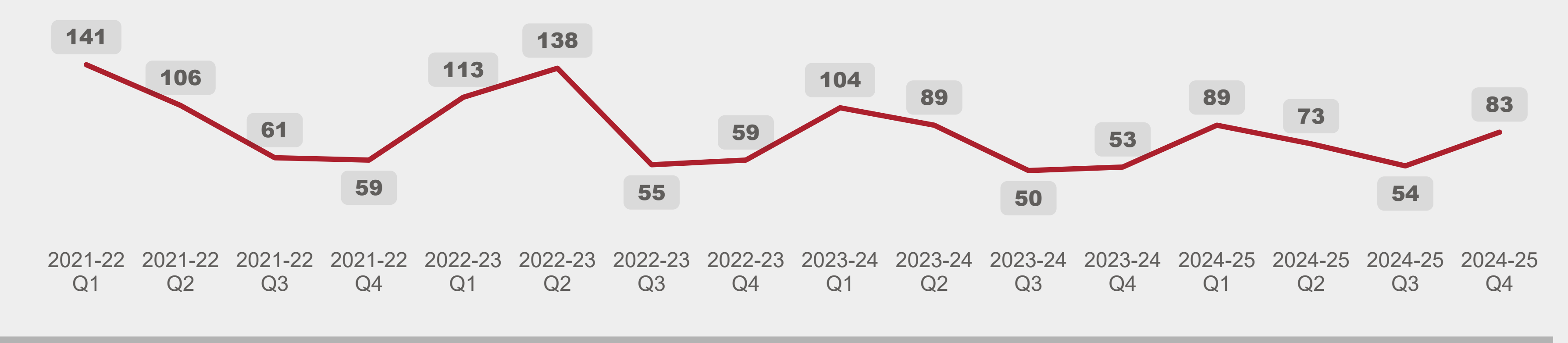
2. Trends

Previous 16 quarters (4 years)

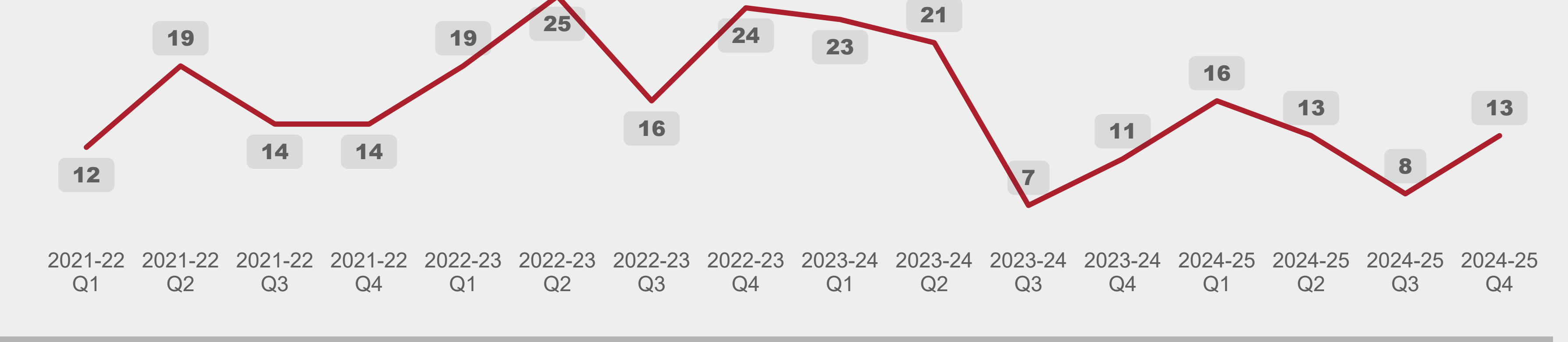
Accidental Dwelling Fires



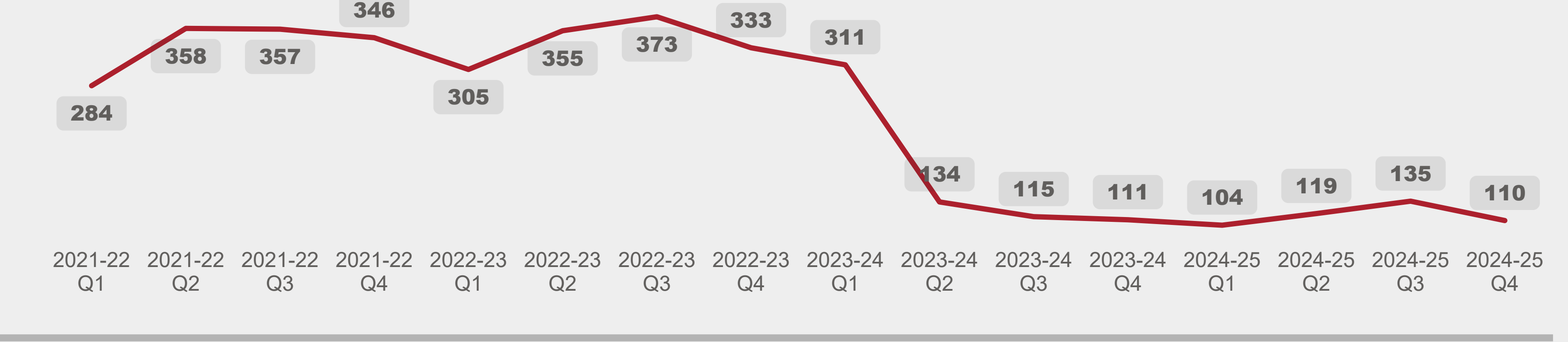
Deliberate Fires



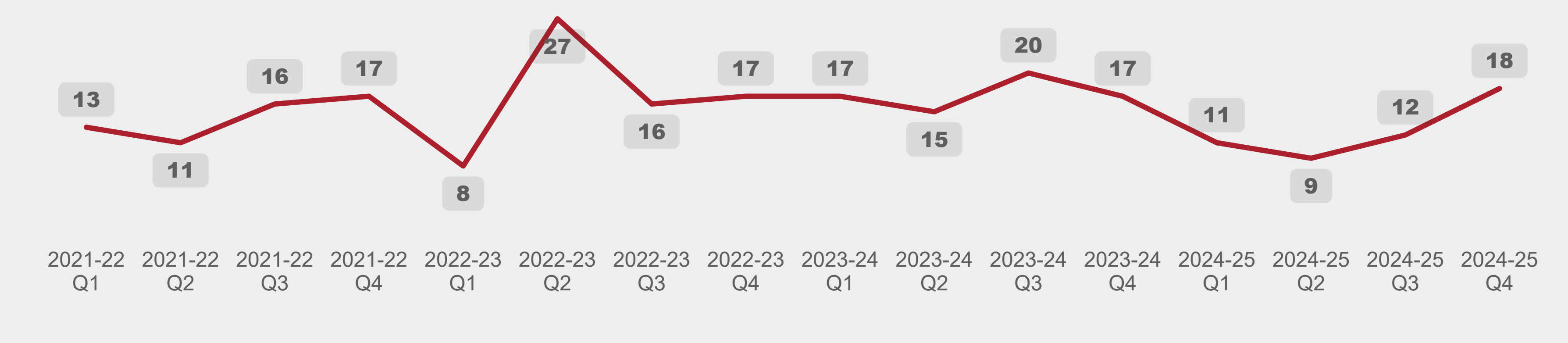
Non-Domestic Fires



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



Road Traffic Collisions

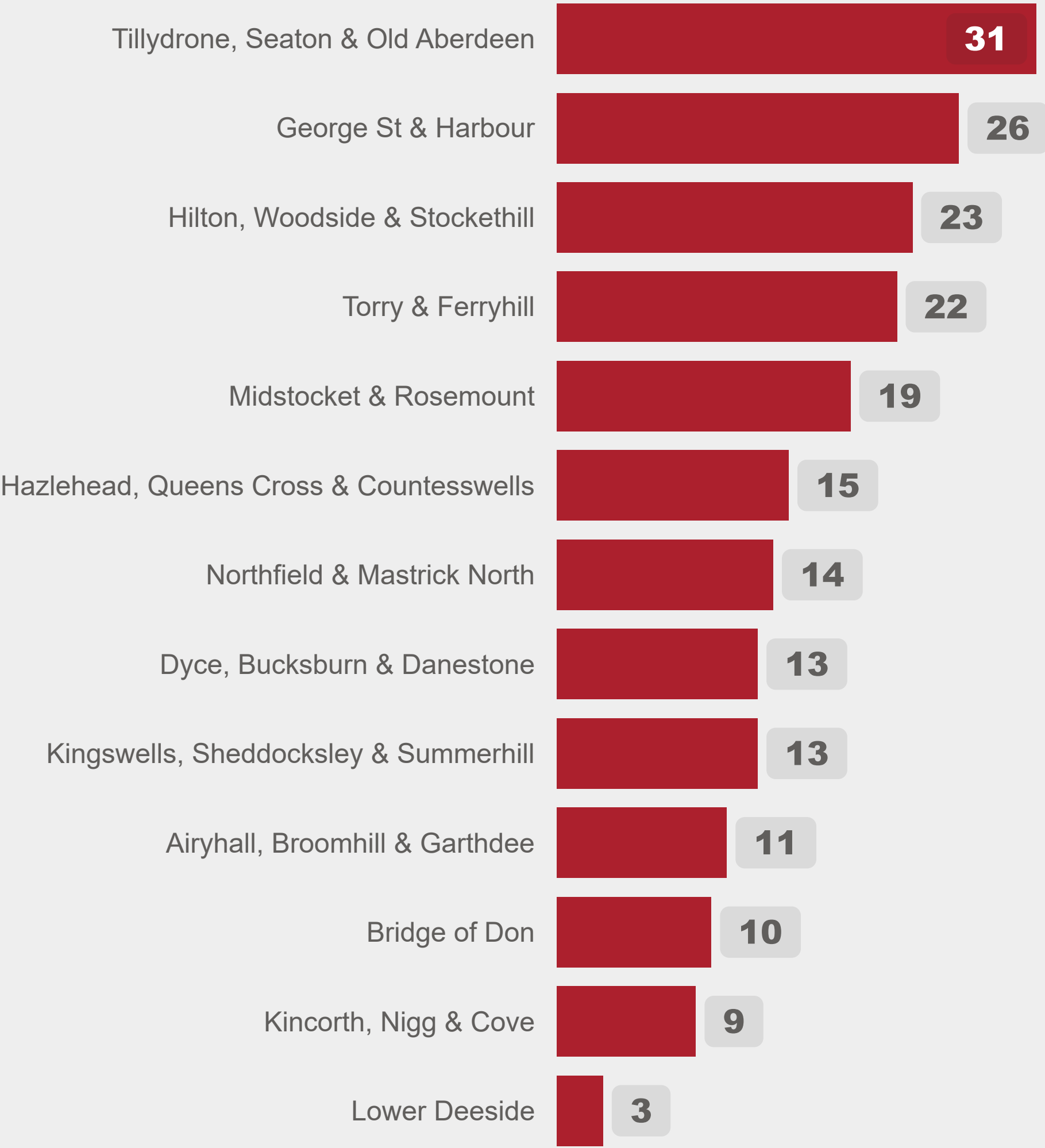


Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Extent of Damage	Incidents
Limited to item 1st ignited	109
Not applicable	68
Limited to room of origin	16
Limited to floor of origin (not whole building)	11
Whole building	2
Affecting more than 2 floors (not whole building)	1
Limited to 2 floors (not whole building)	1
Roof space and other floors(s)	1

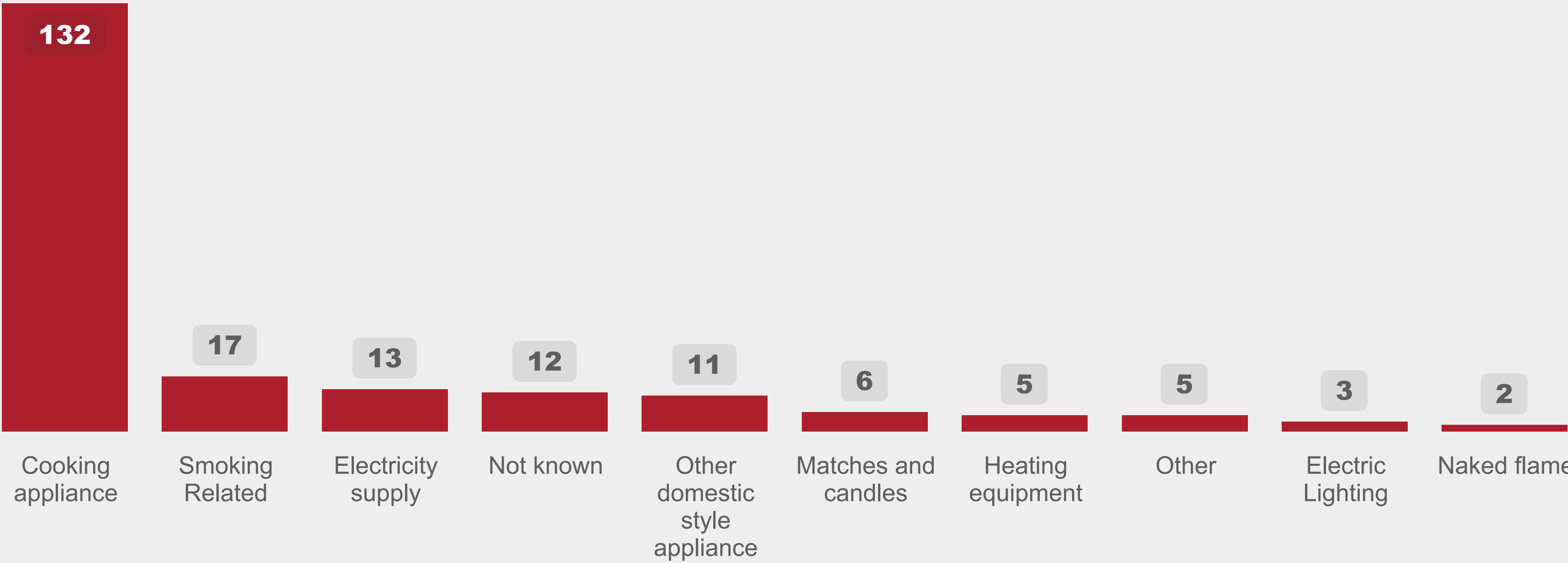
Incidents by Ward



209

Accidental Dwelling Fires in this period

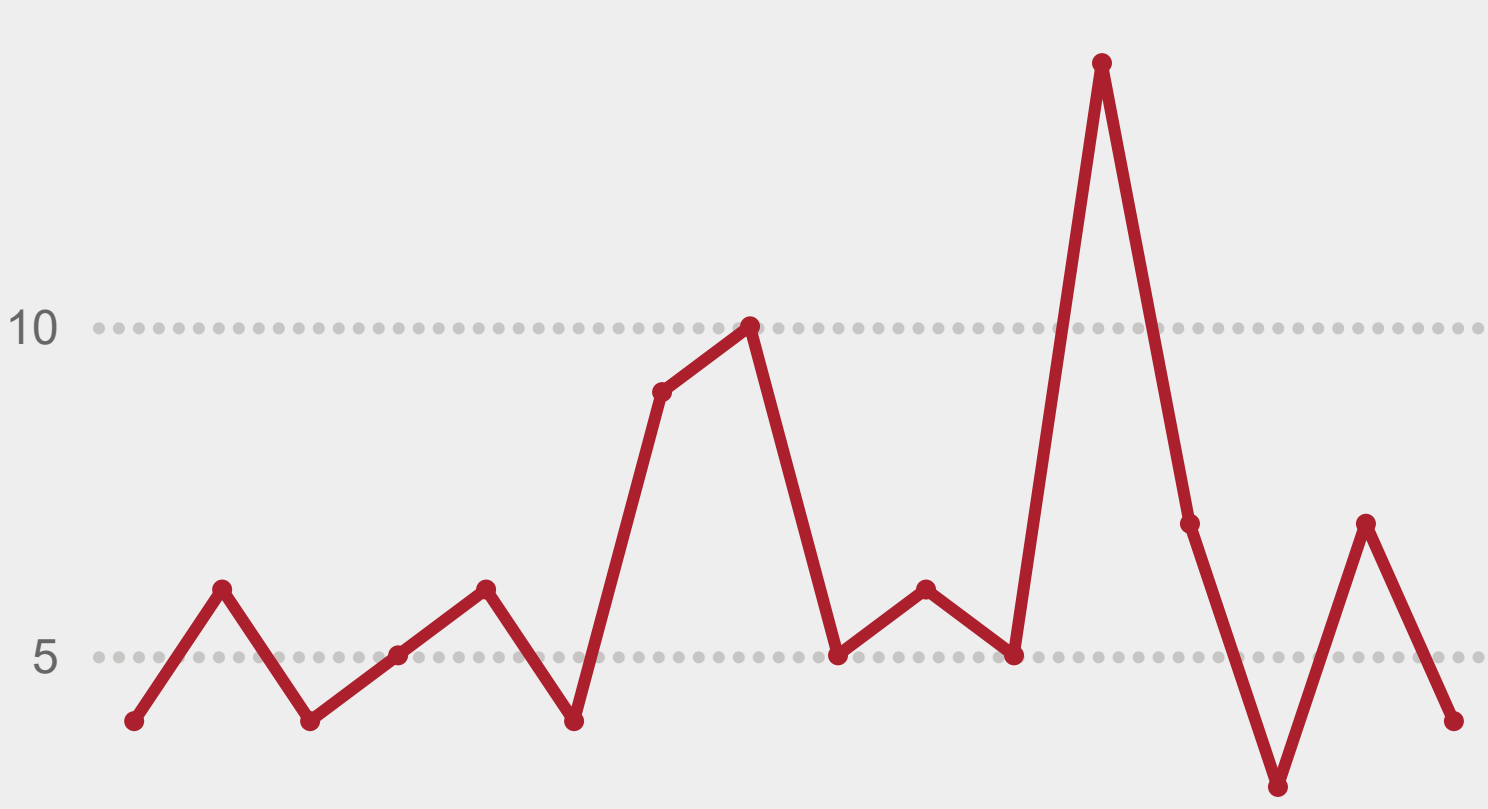
Source of Ignition (Top 10)



There were 209 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF) during the reporting period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 which reflects a decrease in the same reporting period from the previous year which was 222 and is lower than the three-year average 216. The fire damage in 109 of the incidents was contained to the item that was first ignited and the main source of ignition of ADFs over the reporting period was due to cooking.

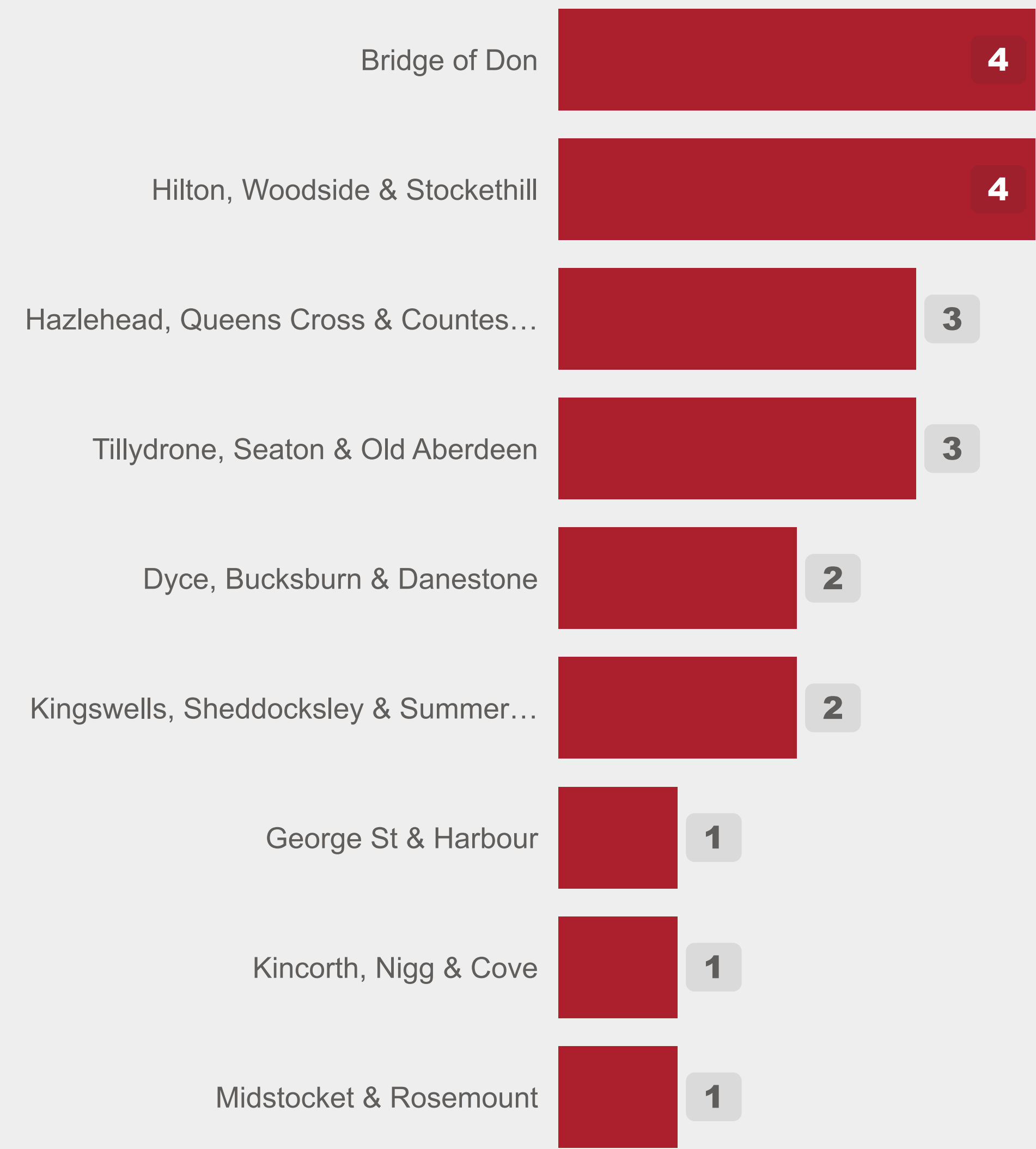
The total number of ADFs continues to decrease in the long term, currently we are reporting the second lowest number of ADFs in the last four years. This is as a result of a number of community safety initiatives delivered through partnership working.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation	16
Burns - slight	2
Burns - severe	1
Combination of burns and overcome by gas/smoke	1
Other medical condition	1

Casualties by Ward



18

Non-Fatal Casualties

3

Fatal Casualties

16

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

13

First Aid Given at Scene

4

Hospital Slight Injuries

1

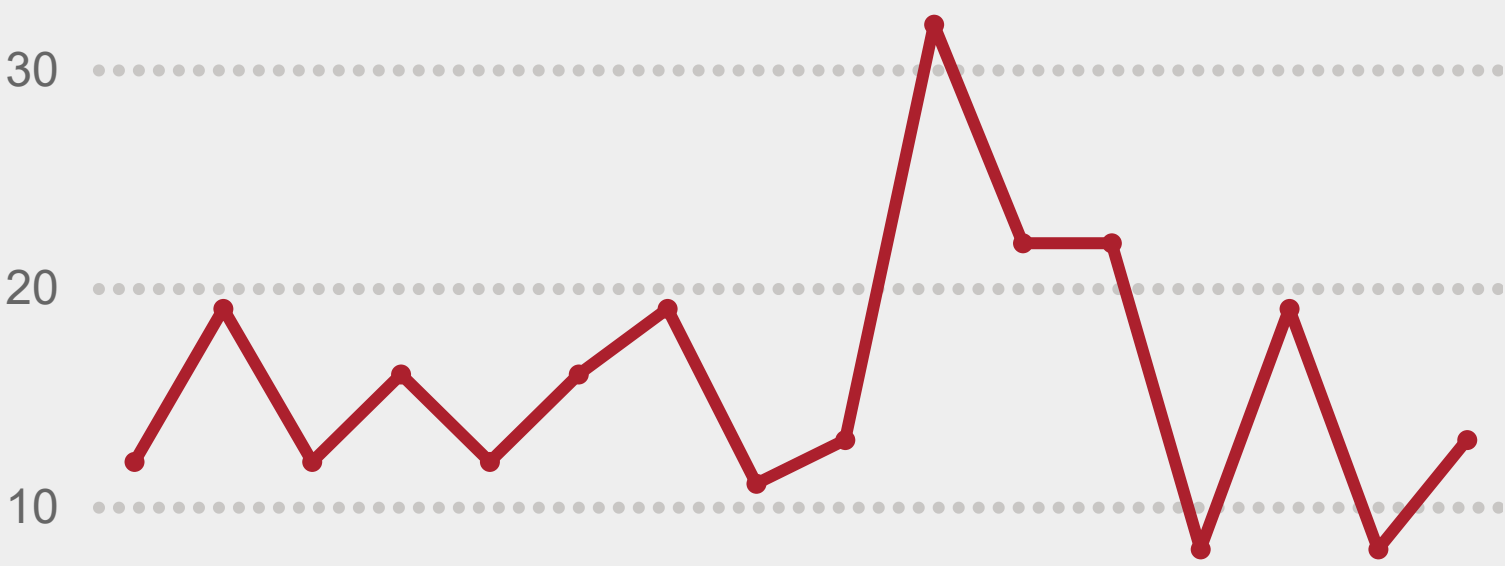
Hospital Serious Injuries

There were 3 fatalities from fire during the reporting period. These occurred in Laverock Way, Middlefield Crescent and Denmore Gardens and were all caused by accidental fires. Within Aberdeen City we continue to work with our partners to ensure that we positively contribute to reducing the risk to our communities and staff by analysis of our operational activities and targeting those most at risk and vulnerable, particularly around unintentional harm in the home. These targeted initiatives will continue to develop and improve as we move forward together to ensure that we provide the most appropriate support for our communities with regard to unintentional harm.

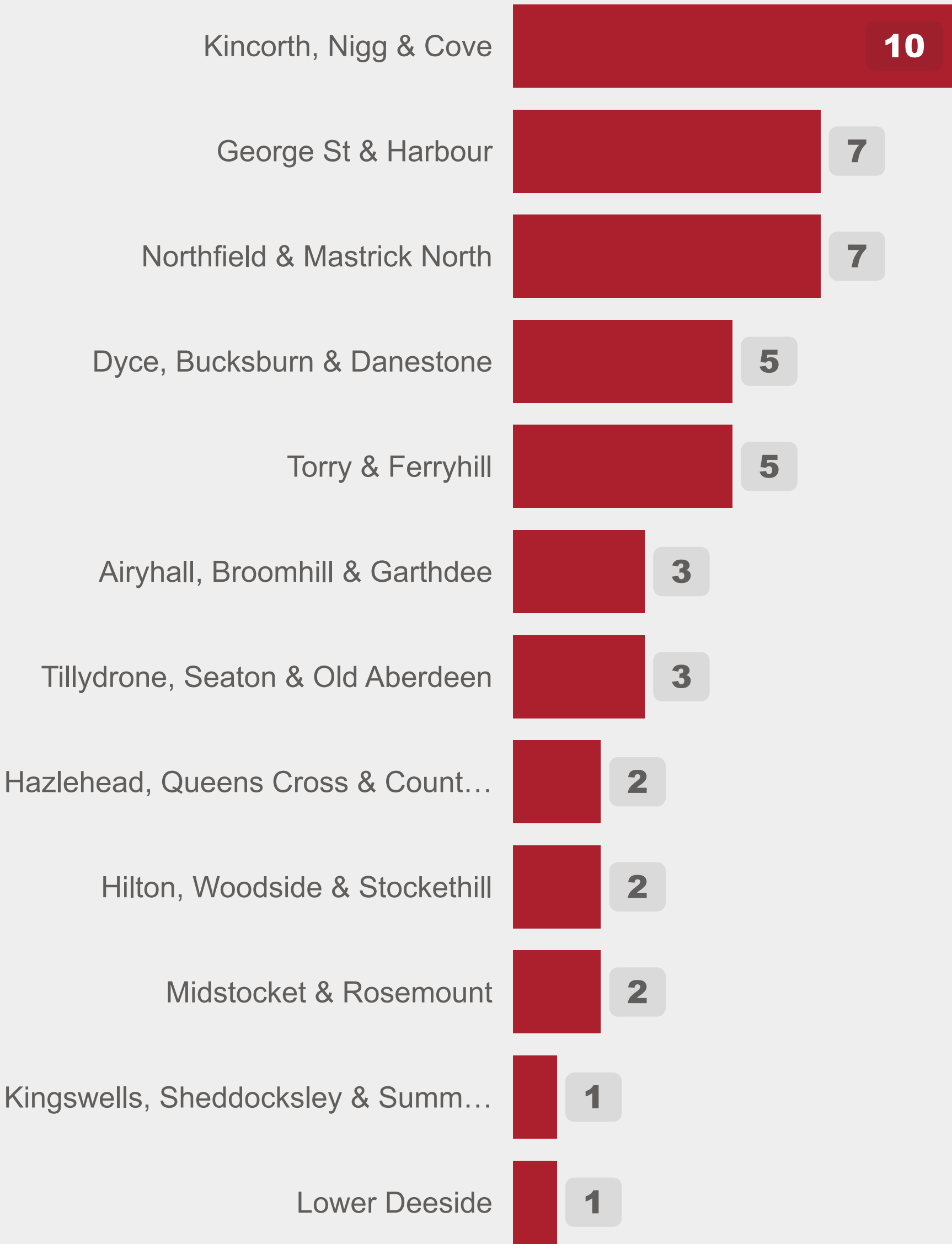
5. Non-Fire Casualties

2024-25

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Casualties by Ward



Nature of Injury/Cause of Death	Casualties
Back / Neck injury (spinal)	8
Fracture	8
Head injury	5
Not known	4
Cuts/Lacerations	3
Other	3
Chest pain / Heart condition / Cardiac arrest	2
Collapse	2
Drowning	2
Other medical condition	2
Breathing difficulties (Other than 'Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes, asphyxiation')	1
Bruising	1
Burns - slight	1
Chest / Abdominal injury	1
Concussion	1
Hypothermia	1
Other physical injury	1
Overcome by gas, smoke or toxic fumes; asphyxiation	1
Unconscious, fitting or unresponsive (see other evident significant injury)	1

40

Non-Fatal Casualties

8

Fatal Casualties

164

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)



9

First Aid Given at Scene



20

Hospital Slight Injuries



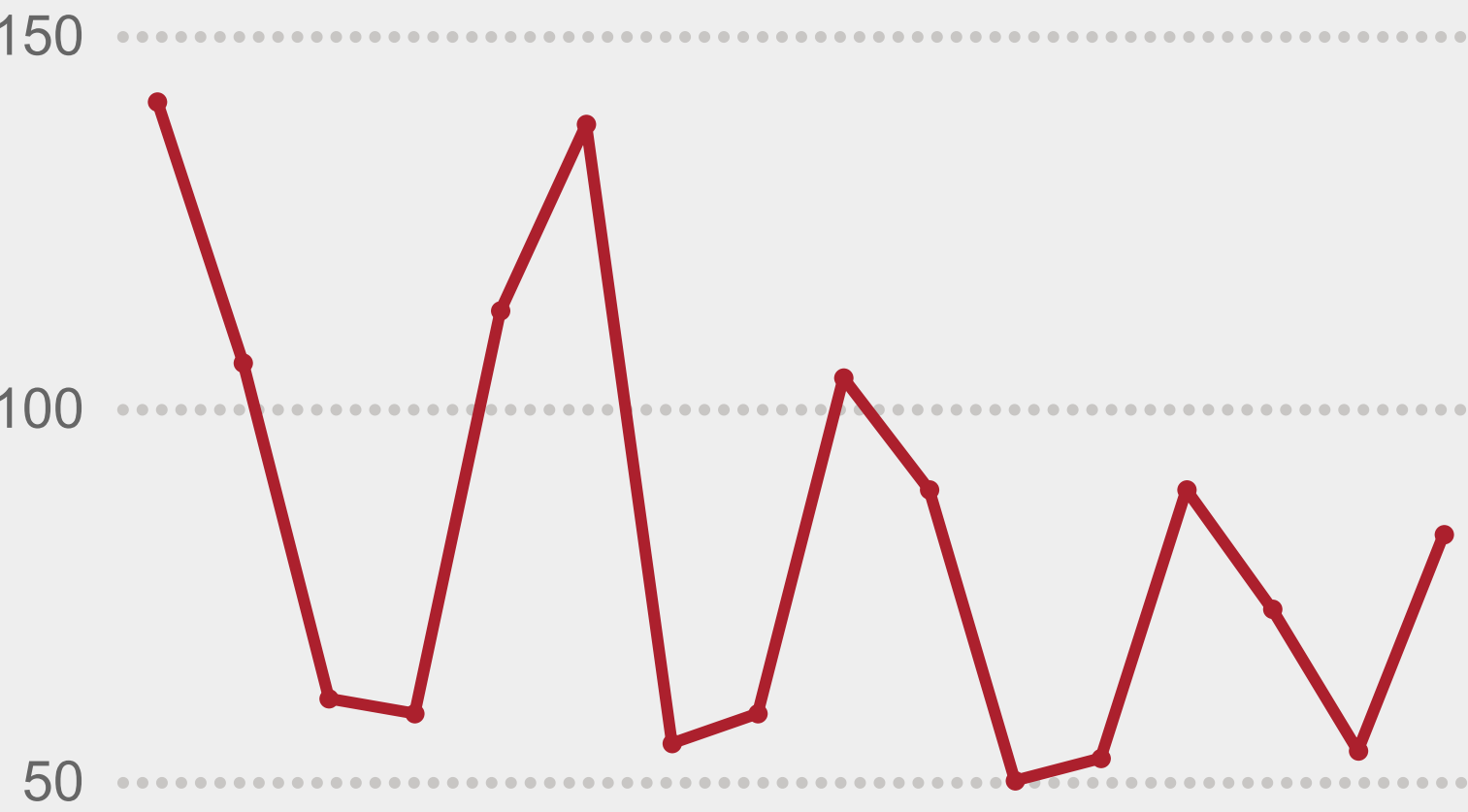
11

Hospital Serious Injuries

The SFRS attends a variety of incidents that involves the treatment of casualties such as Road Traffic Collisions (RTC), Water Rescue, Rescue from Height and Medical Emergencies. We attended incidents where there were 8 fatalities over the reporting period which was a decrease from the reporting period 23-24 (13) and we also attended incidents where there were 40 non fatal casualties, a decrease from 76 in the previous year.

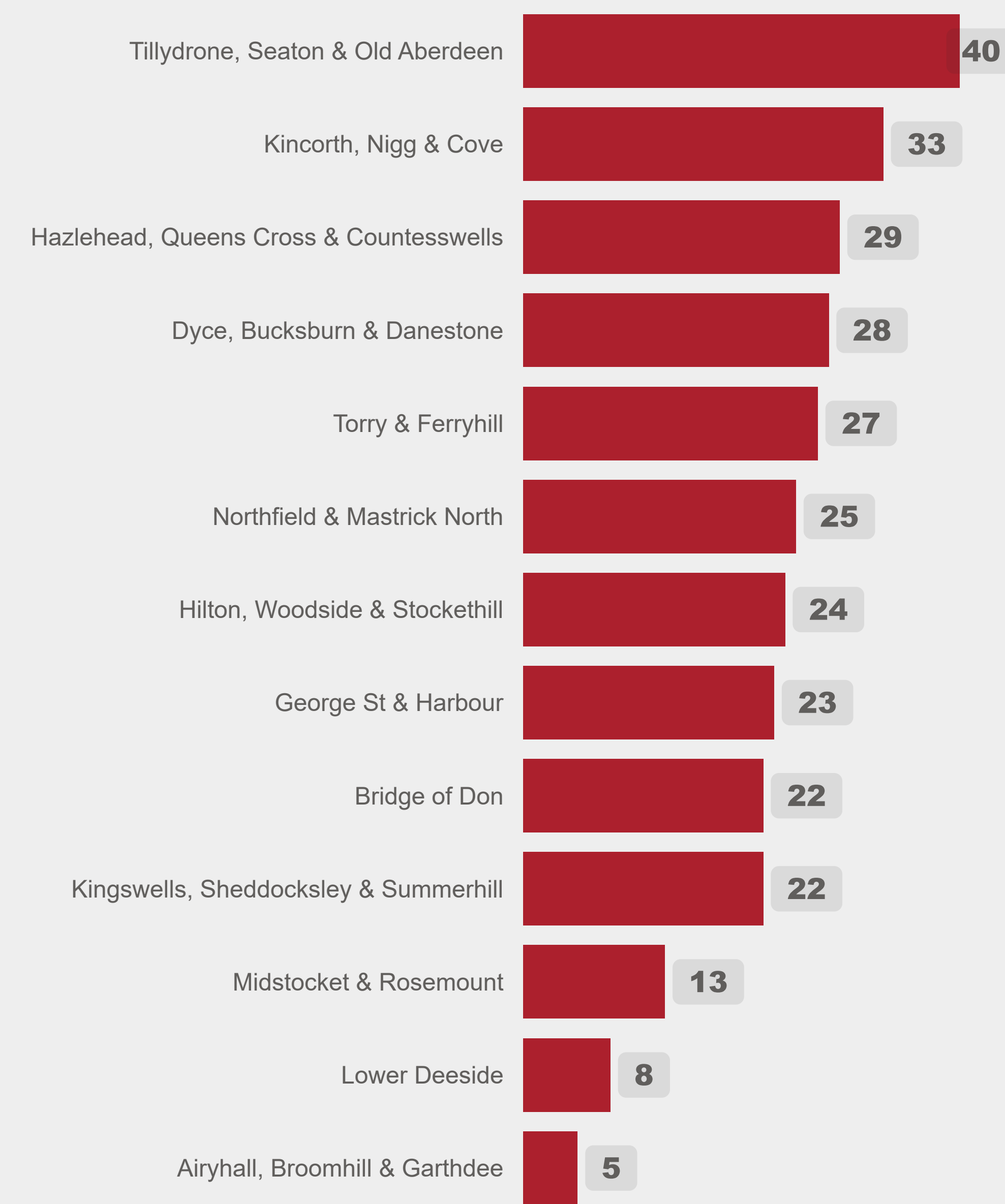
Of the 40 persons who were assisted 9 were given first aid at the scene of the incident, 11 were taken to hospital with serious injures and 20 attended hospital with slight injuries. There total number of people rescued by Firefighters across the City of Aberdeen from all incident types during the reporting period was 164.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Property Type	Incident
Grassland, woodland and crops	95
Refuse	70
Other outdoors (including land)	51
Dwelling	32
Road Vehicle	25
Non Residential	14
Outdoor structures	11
Outdoor equipment and machinery	1

Incidents by Ward



299

Deliberate Fires
in this period

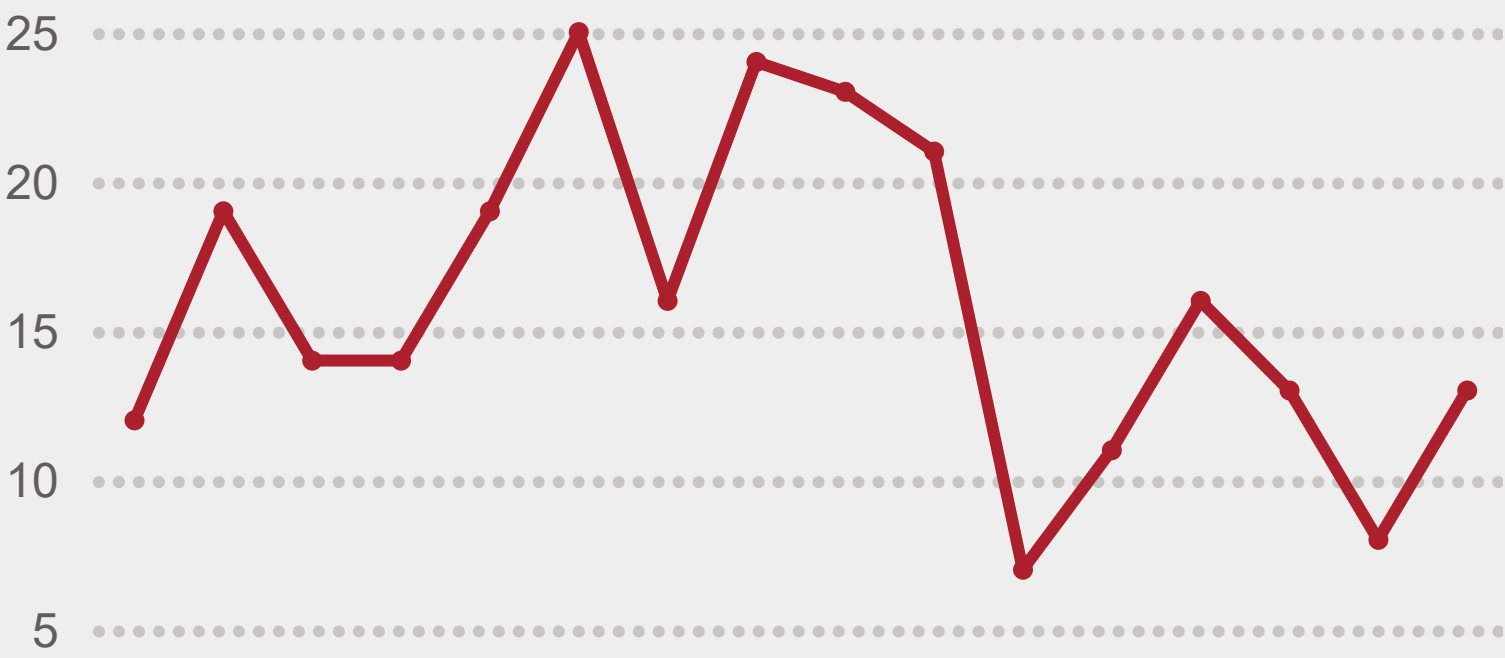
Hour of Day



There were 299 deliberate fire incidents during the reporting period which is below the three-year average of 320 but slightly higher than last year (296). 95 of the incidents were Grassland, Wood and Crops with the the area of Tillydrone, Seaton and Old Aberdeen having 50 deliberate fire incidents.

During the reporting period we have continued to work with partners to reduce the number of all deliberate fire incidents within the City of Aberdeen . This proactive approach, particularly around youth engagement, endeavors to reduce the number of deliberate fires. We have worked alongside partners and local schools to reduce this unacceptable, anti-social behaviour.

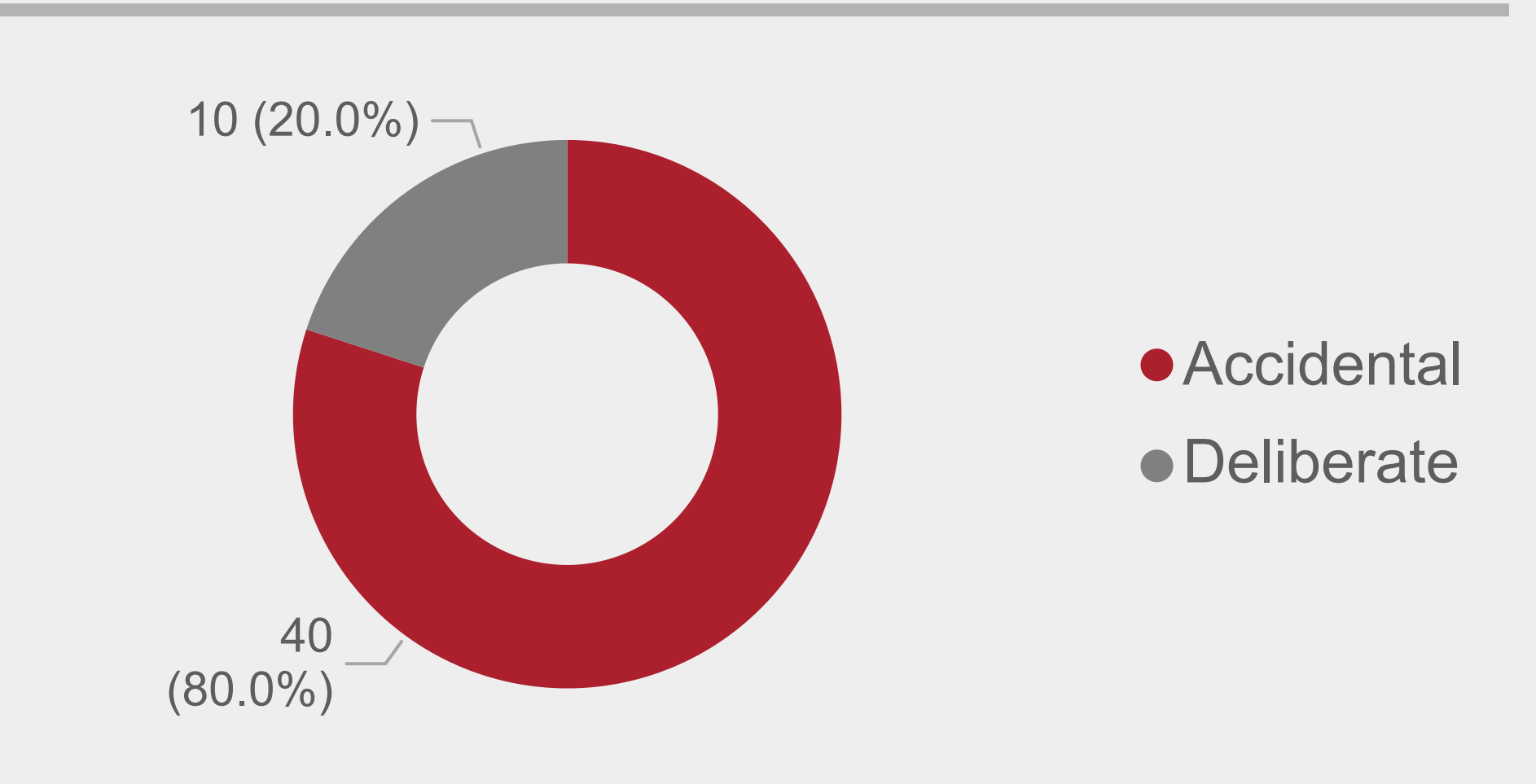
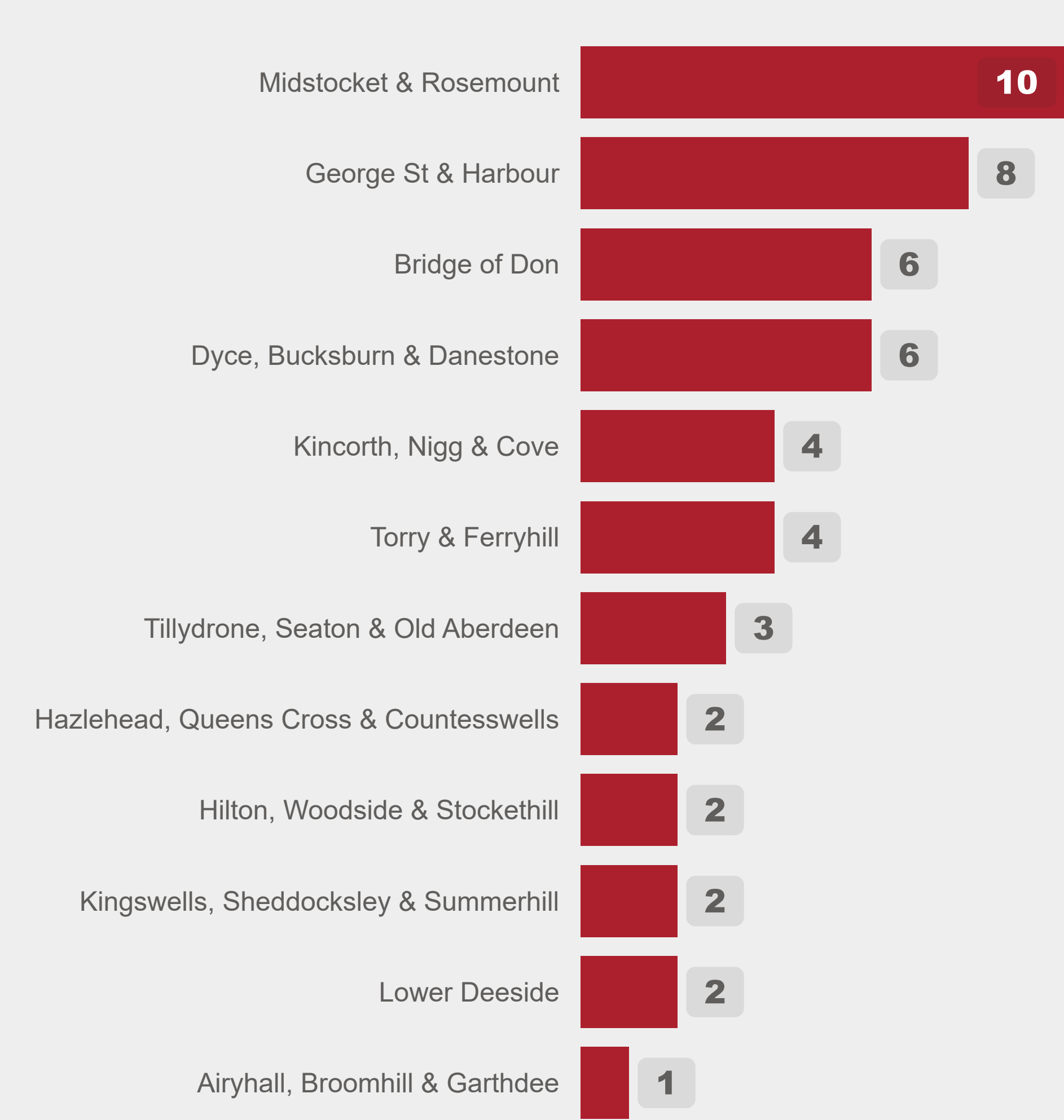
Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Hospitals and medical care	9
Industrial Manufacturing	5
Retail	5
Food and Drink	4
Hotel/motel	4
Student Hall of Residence	4
Education	3
Other buildings/use not known	2
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	2
Vehicle Repair	2
Car Parks	1
Entertainment and culture	1
Hostel (e.g. for homeless people)	1
Industrial Processing	1
Offices and call centres	1
Permanent Agricultural	1
Public Utilities	1
Sporting venues	1
Transport buildings	1
Warehouses	1

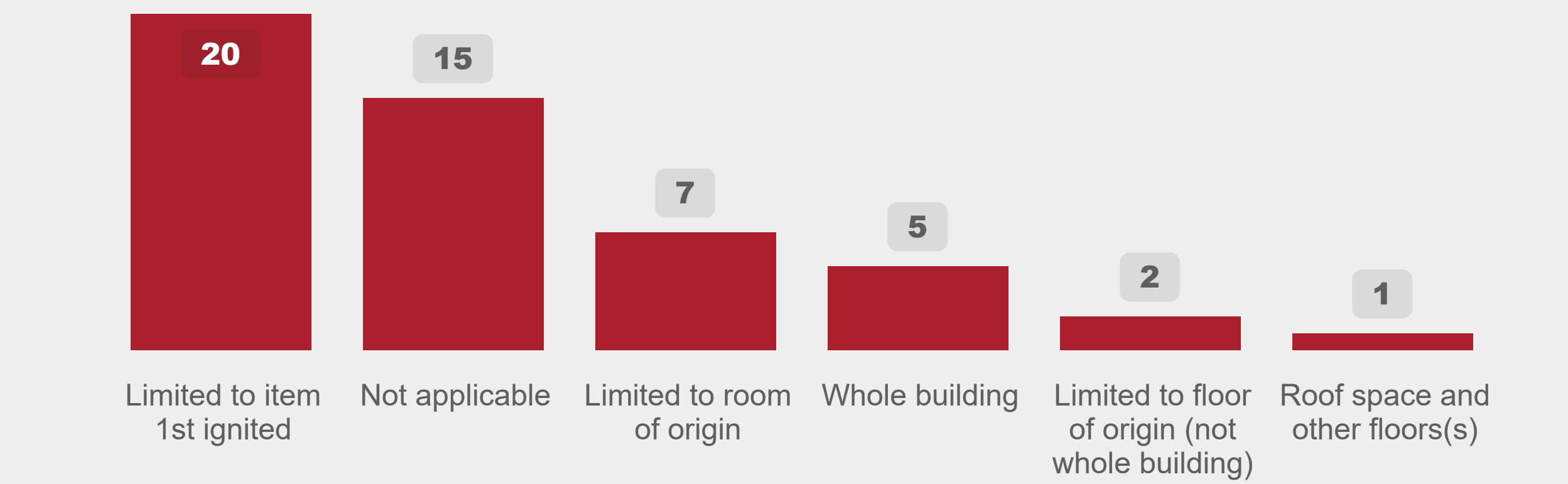
Incidents by Ward



50

Non-Domestic Fires in this period

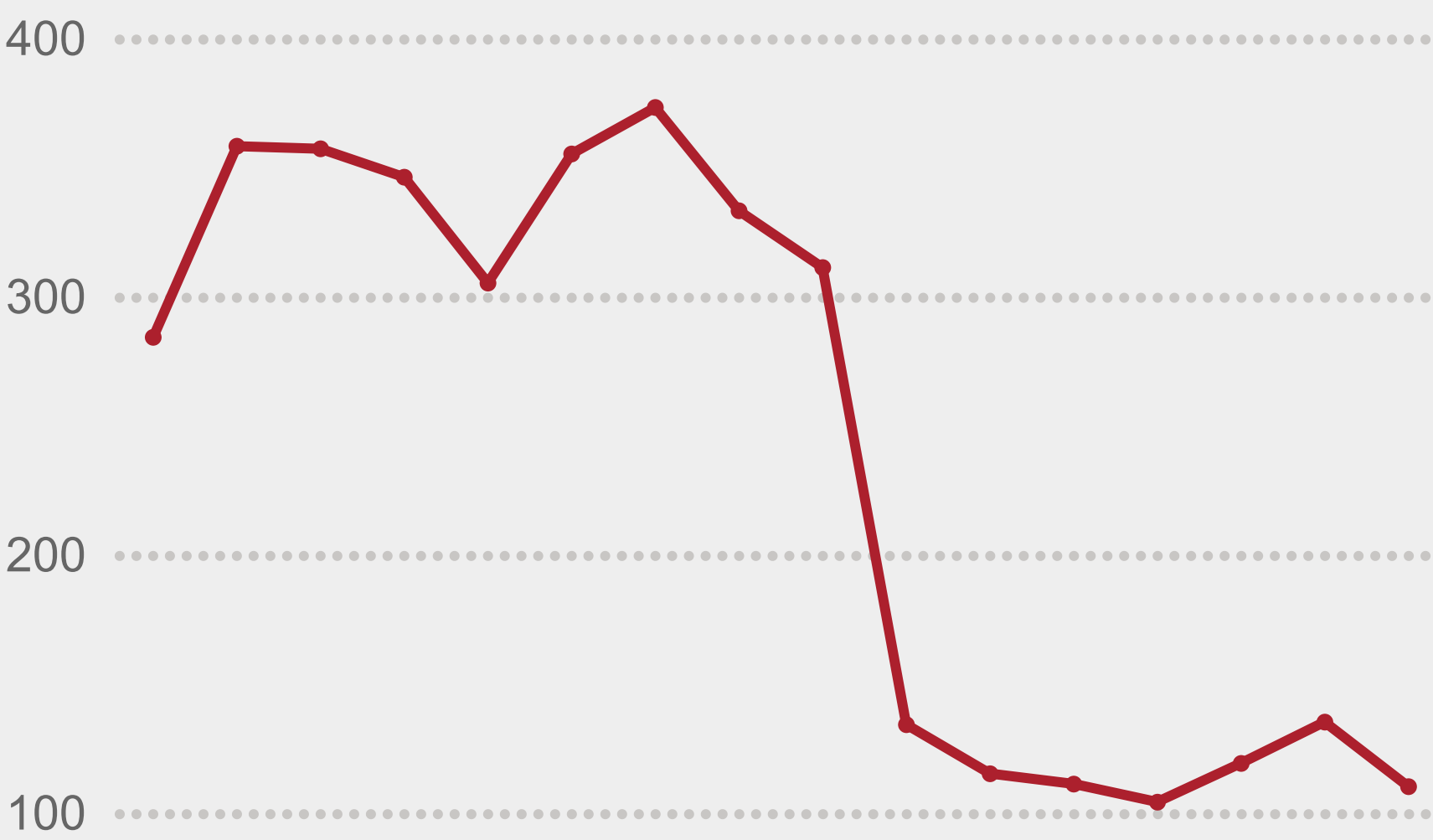
Extent of Damage



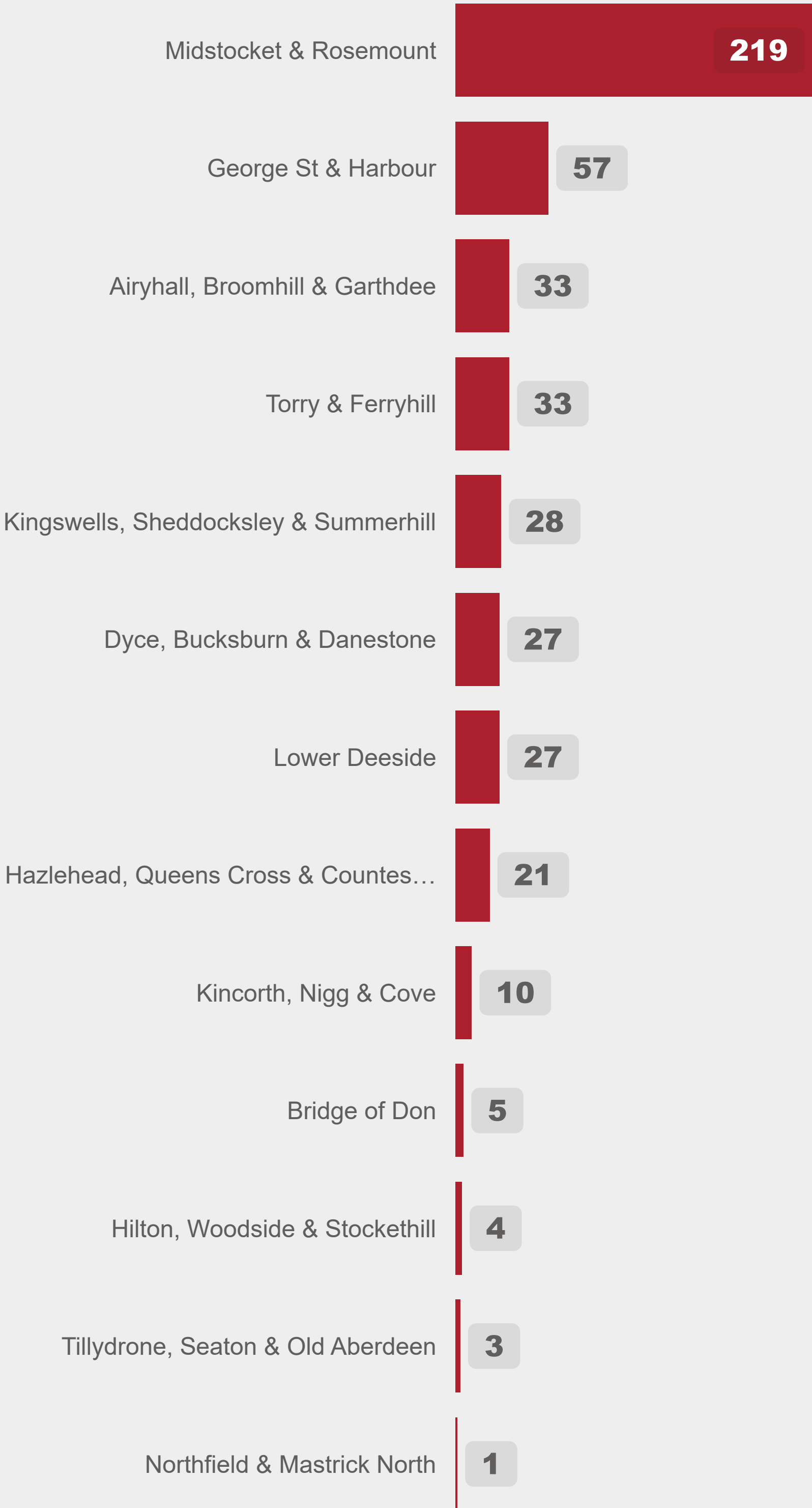
There were 50 fires in non domestic properties over the reporting period which reflects a decrease from the same reporting period last year (51). Hospital and Medical Care facilities accounted for 9 incidents with Industrial Manufacturing and Retail accounting for 5 incidents each. 40 of the incidents were accidental with 10 being fires that were started deliberately.

Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (FSEO’s) will continue to provide the most appropriate level of support to local businesses to enable suitable and timely legislative fire safety guidance and enforcement to be undertaken.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



Incidents by Ward



Top 15 Property Types

Property Type	Incidents
Hospitals and medical care	222
Hotel/motel	50
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	49
Student Hall of Residence	44
Residential Home	37
Food and Drink	15
Offices and call centres	10
Hostel (e.g. for homeless people)	7
Education	5
Retail	5
Warehouses and bulk storage	5
Boarding House/B&B for homeless/asylum seekers	4
Industrial Processing	4
Entertainment and culture	3
Boarding House/B&B other	2
Other Residential Home	2
Transport buildings	2

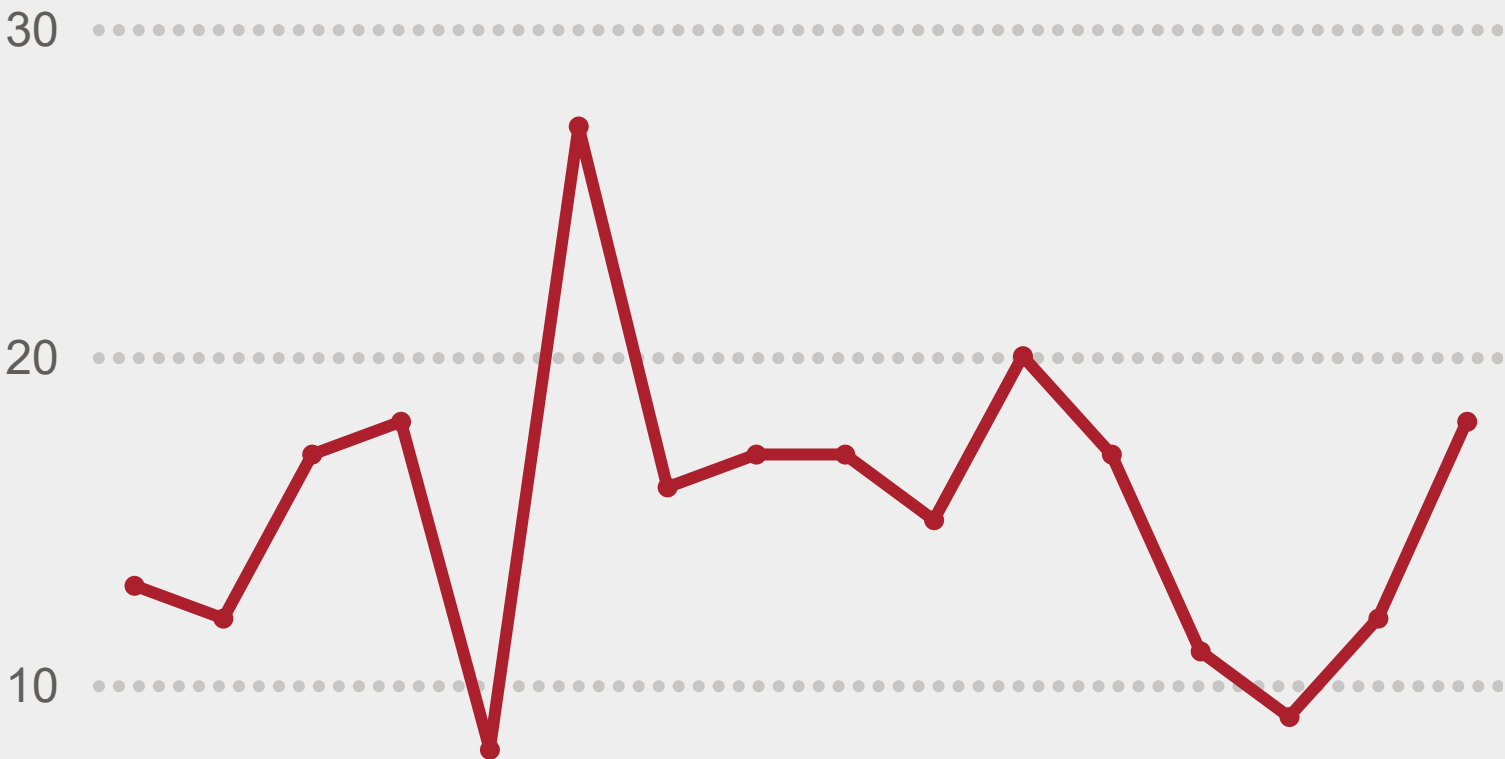
468

Unwanted Fire Alarm
Signals in this period

During the reporting period the SFRS attended 468 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) from a total of 1535 false alarms. Hospitals and Medical Care facilities are responsible for the vast majority of UFAS incidents and operational crews continue to investigate the cause of every UFAS event to ensure the appropriate level of engagement with the duty holder when in attendance at these call-outs. Every UFAS incident SFRS attends is used as an opportunity to educate the duty holder about the impact UFAS has on their businesses, the community and the Fire and Rescue Service.

Since the introduction of the UFAS Reduction Policy there has been a marked decrease in UFAS incidents that has allowed our operational crews to dedicate additional time to ensuring operational preparedness and to conduct community safety engagement activities.

Trend by Quarter (4 years)



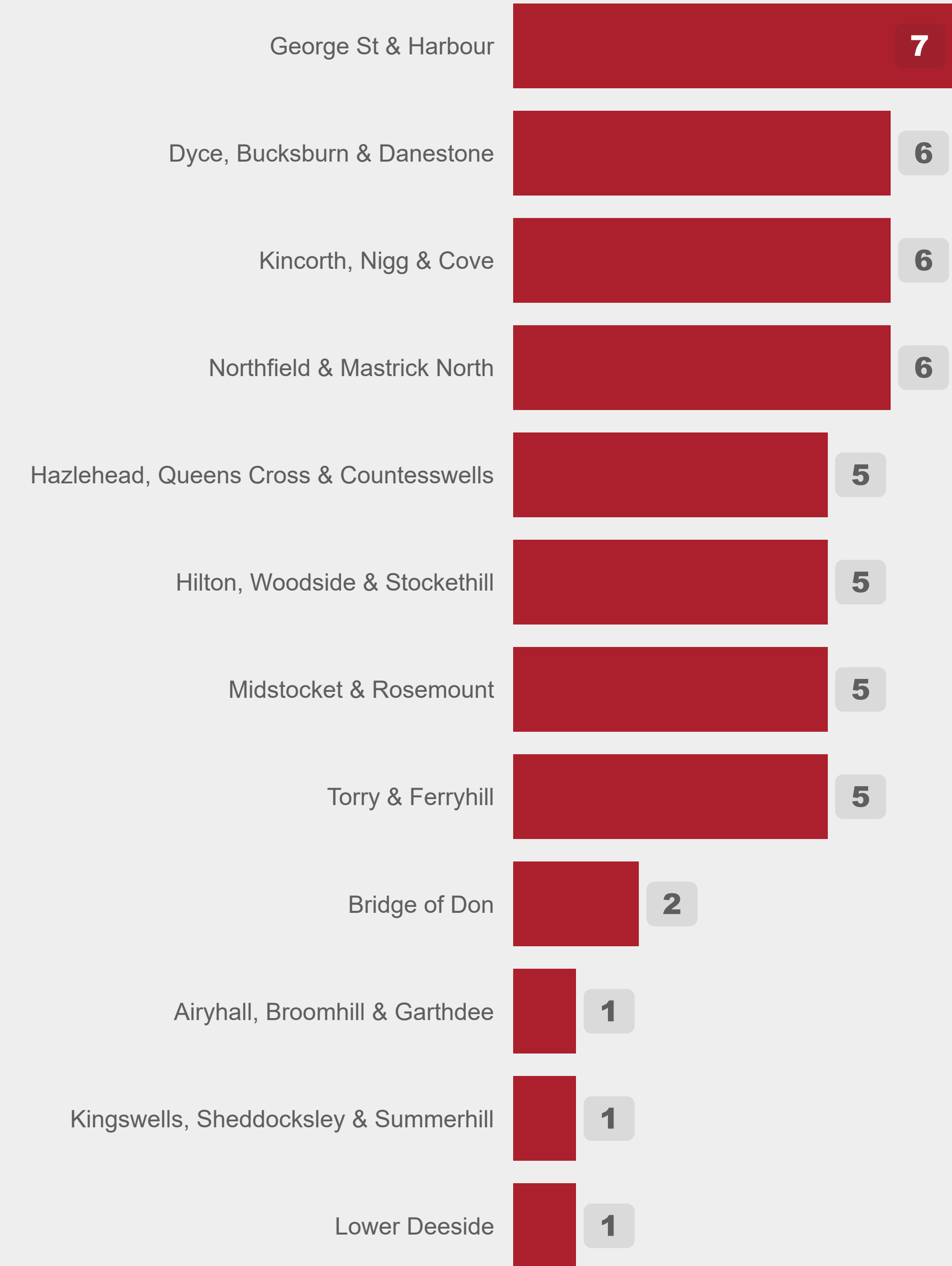
50

Road Traffic Collisions in this period

Property Type	Incidents
Car	41
Lorry/HGV	5
Van	2
Motorcycle	1
Multiple Vehicles	1

Incident Type	Incidents
Vehicle (Non-fire)	50

Incidents by Ward



13

Non-Fatal Casualties

1

Fatal Casualties

7

People Rescued by Firefighters

Extent of Harm (Non-Fatal)

3

First Aid Given at Scene

8

Hospital Slight Injuries

2

Hospital Serious Injuries

We attended 50 Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) this is the lowest total in the last five years and well below the three-year average of 62. We have been actively engaging with members of the community in initiatives such as New Young Driver Intervention Scheme (targeting 17-25 year olds), FATAL 5 Road Safety Talks (targeting Commuter Drivers) and Elderly Driver talks.

10. Home Fire Safety Visits

2024-25

HFSVs by Ward

1,242

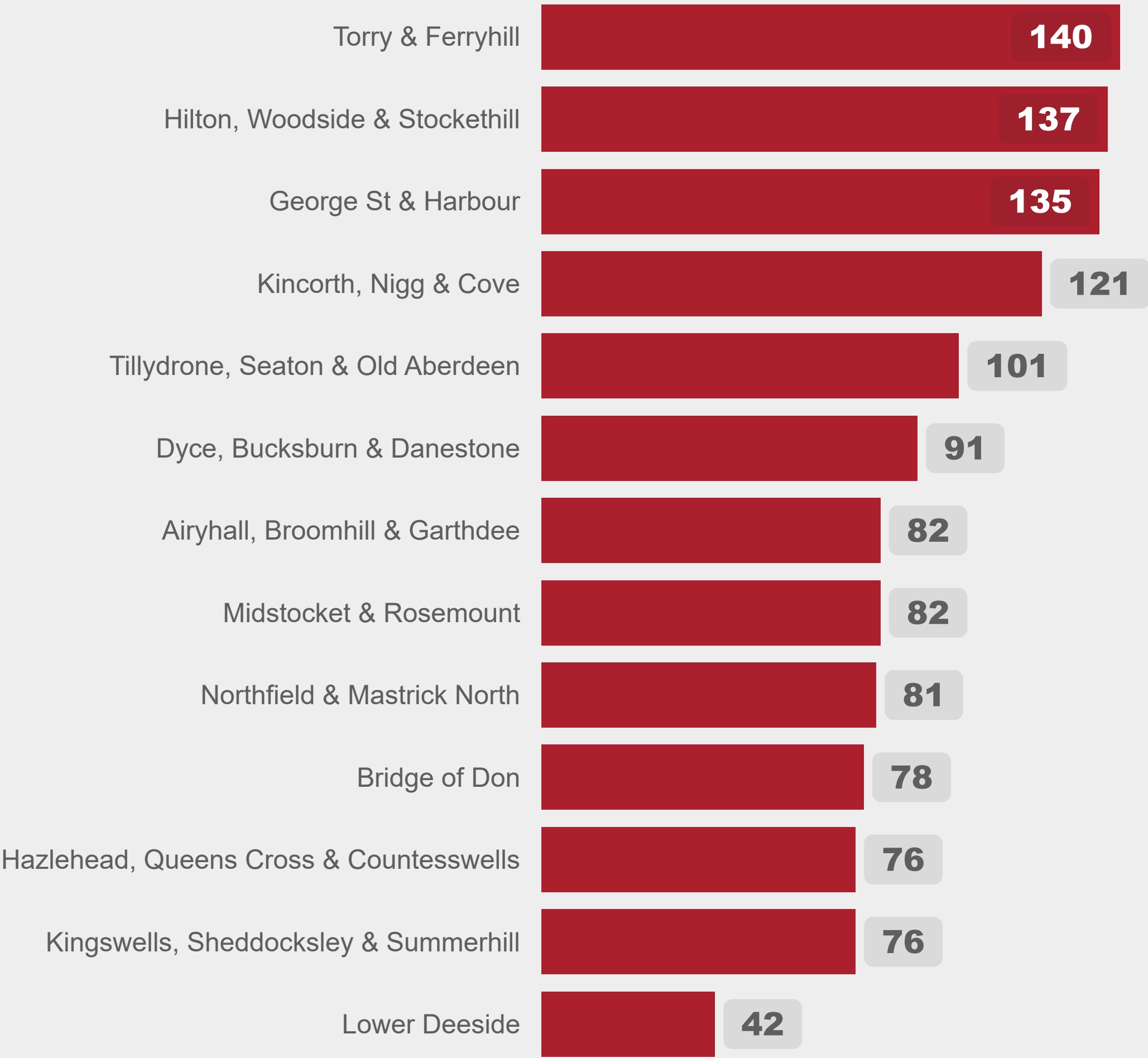
Home Fire
Safety Visits

503

High Risk
HFSVs

446

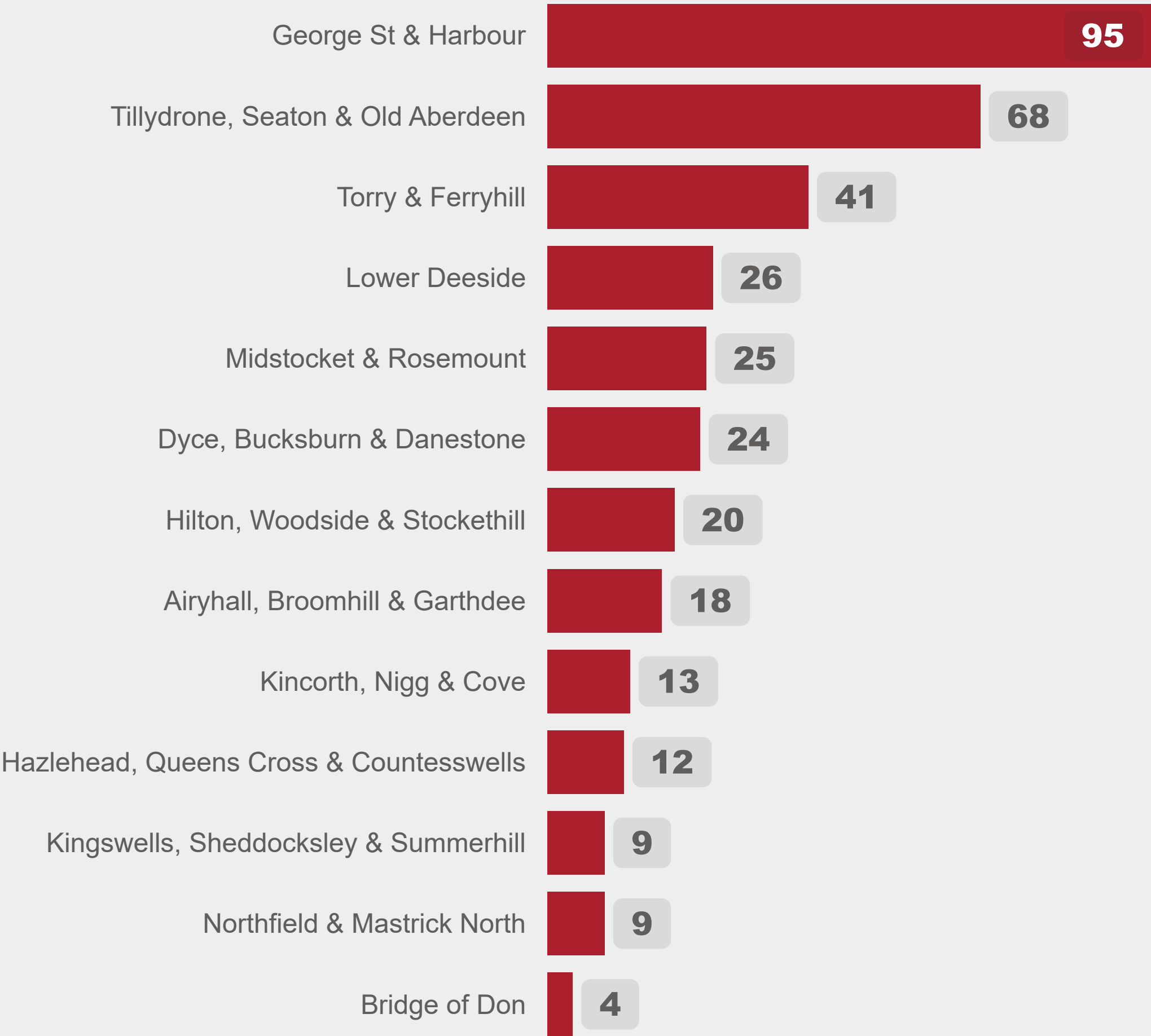
Partner Referral
HFSVs



11. Fire Safety Enforcement

Job Type	Count
Audit	364
Specific Visit	166
Consultation	22
Short Post Fire Audit	3

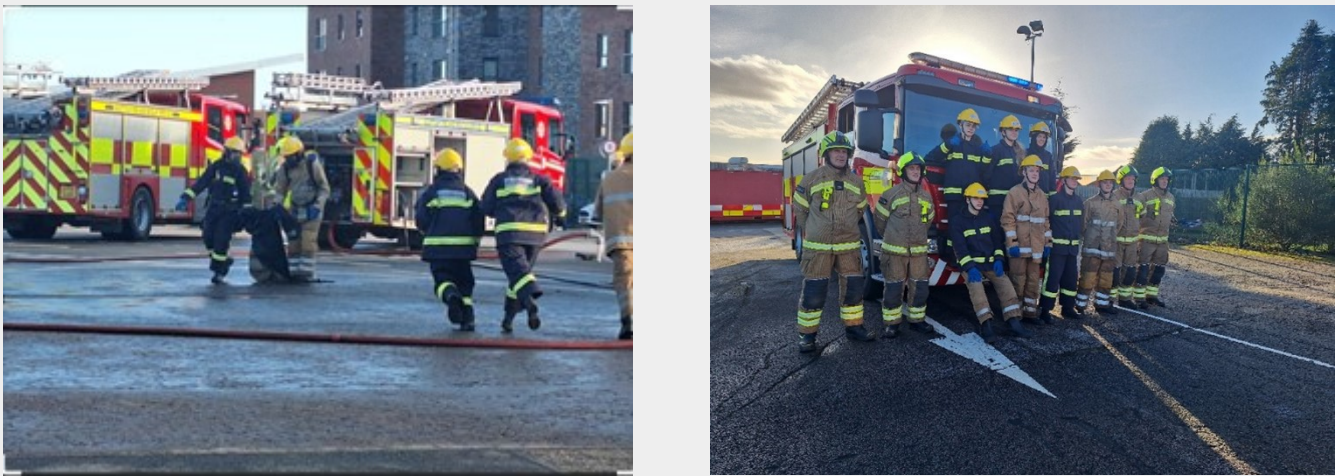
Audits by Ward



Home Fire Safety Visits - Prevention is at the heart of our activities and the SFRS carried out 1242 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) across the City of Aberdeen during the reporting period. 503 High Risk HFSV were carried out by Operational personnel and our Community Action Team and there were 446 partner referrals to the SFRS for HFSV to be carried out. Communication with Partners is essential to ensure that we target those most at risk from fire within our communities.

Fire Safety Enforcement - Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (FSEO) conducted 555 visits to premises across the city and a great deal of fire safety enforcement activity involves the engagement with local businesses to ensure they maintain safety procedures to ensure the safety of their staff and members of the public.

Over the reporting period our Operational Staff, supported by our Community Action Team, have delivered a variety of initiatives across the city targeting the most at risk as well as educating members of the community. Working in partnership with colleagues from all sectors the SFRS continues to focus on Prevention and below are some of the initiatives that we have supported.



Throughout the year four Fire Skills Courses were delivered to students from various Secondary Schools in Aberdeen City. The course enabled the students to gain knowledge on basic firefighting, emergency response skills and first aid. More importantly, it is hoped the elements of teamwork, effective communication and problem solving benefited the students as they progress towards their adult life. The positive feedback from students, parents and education staff shows the great benefit that this initiative brings and the service will continue to develop this program.



In conjunction with Police Scotland, The Community Action Team have organised five Child Car Seat Clinics throughout the year. The clinics have given SFRS staff the opportunity to check 106 car seats, checking such things as incompatible seats, loose belts and harnesses and incorrect routings. From the checks, 54% of car seat fittings were found to have major faults, thus enabling us to either correct the fittings or advise on alternative seats.



The City Stations and Community Action Team took the opportunity to get involved with Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) North East and NESCOL and took part in eight Career Fairs throughout the City. A variety of careers within SFRS were showcased including Operational Firefighting, Mechanics, ICT, Human Resources, Operational Control and Business Support Admin etc. The engagement from young people and was extremely encouraging.

After a spate of incidents Operation Personnel conducted inspections of all High Rise premises across the city. Crews visited each premise twice during March and communicated any issues to ACC with a follow up visit carried out to ensure all issues were rectified. The Community Action Team and Operational Crews also engaged with schools and partners after a spate of deliberate fires.

Future Engagement Initiatives - Aberdeen City is now one of three local authorities in Scotland participating in the Marmot collaboration, which aims to address health inequalities by improving local policies and actions that tackle the social determinants of health, such as housing, education and employment.

The SFRS being a Strategic partner in this initiative, brings a unique and vital contribution to addressing health inequalities and improving outcomes across communities. With deep-rooted local presence, high levels of public trust, and routine access to vulnerable households, the SFRS are ideally positioned to support the principles of the Marmot Review. Our role in prevention can help the SFRS, through collaborative partnerships with health, social care, and other partners, identify at-risk individuals, signpost services, and deliver interventions that reduce harm, promote wellbeing, and build community resilience. In addition to the above across the City the SFRS will be expanding their engagement with schools and community groups to include inputs on healthy eating and active lives.

13. Glossary of Terms

Term - What it means

ADF

Accidental Dwelling Fire.

HFSV

Home Fire Safety Visit.

PDIR

Post Domestic Incident Response, a term used to indicate actions taken following attendance at a fire or other incident in the home. PDIRs include amongst things the offer of a free follow up home fire safety visit.

RTC

Road Traffic Collision.

Special Service

Calls to incidents which are not fires or false alarms such as RTCs, rescues, flooding, incidents involving hazardous materials or the provision of assistance to other agencies.

UFAS

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. When an automatic fire detection and alarm system is activated as a result of anything other than an actual fire the activation is classed as a false alarm. If an attendance is made to such an event by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, then the event is recorded as an UFAS incident.

UFAS Policy Change

In response to COVID, on the 6th May 2020, the SFRS decided to send 1 pump to UFAS premises that did not have their own Predetermined attendance (PDA).

As of 1st July 2023, the COVID interim 1 pump response was ended and a new UFAS policy was implemented.

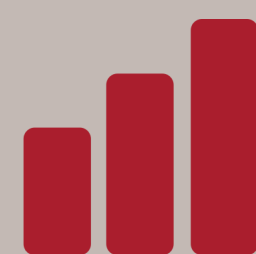
The new policy is to call challenge all UFAS incidents with the intention of non-attendance. Hospitals, care homes, and sleeping risk premises are all exempt and receive either 2 pumps or their premise specific PDA.



SCOTTISH

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland



BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE

Design, figures and charts by the Business Intelligence team.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing & Public Protection
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Thematic Report - Crime Prevention
REPORT NUMBER	POL/25/116
DIRECTOR	
CHIEF OFFICER	
REPORT AUTHOR	Inspector Martyn Thomson, North East Division, Police Scotland
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.20

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides the Committee with a strategic overview of ongoing crime prevention activity across North East Division.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Discuss, comment on, and endorse the report.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 North East Division, in collaboration with stakeholders, delivers crime prevention through the implementation of strategies, policies, and measures designed to reduce crime, deter criminality, and enhance public safety through early intervention.
- 3.2 While crime prevention is a shared responsibility, the Division's dedicated workstreams are primarily led by Partnerships, Preventions and Interventions Unit (PPI) and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), under the oversight of departmental Chief Inspectors.
- 3.3 North East Division continues to deliver a broad suite of proactive crime prevention measures through multi-agency partnerships, intelligence-led operations and public engagement strategies. It employs a layered approach -

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spanning digital platforms, community engagement, and strategic campaigns, to ensure impactful and sustainable crime outcomes.

3.4 DELIVERY METHODS

3.5 Community Engagement & Presentations

- On average, 20 in-person engagements are delivered monthly (approx. 240 annually).
- Target audiences include businesses, community groups, industry sectors, and schools (e.g. Men's Sheds, NFU members, Oil Sector & Young Farmers).
- Bespoke initiatives focus on emerging threats, including cyber safety and sextortion awareness in schools.

3.6 Social Media & Digital Campaigns

- Since April 2024, 287 posts have generated 5.5 million views and 5.9 million impressions.
- Engagement: 10.3k likes, 7.4k shares, and 1k comments.
- Delivered Neighbourhood Watch-related content to approx. 40,000 individuals.
- Topics included fraud, rural crime, and scams.

3.7 Crime Alerts and Newsletters

- The '*North East Crime Alert Newsletter*' is produced by the Crime Reduction Team and distributed bi-monthly through partner agencies.
- Recent editions have focused on artificial intelligence in criminality and trends in cyber and rural crime.

3.8 CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES

3.9 Crime Reduction Roadshows

- The *Crime Reduction Anti-Fraud Roadshow* (March 2024) showcased collaborative efforts involving Police Scotland, British Transport Police, Trading Standards, and Neighbourhood Watch.
- Future roadshows are planned for 2025 to engage vulnerable groups.

3.10 Awareness Weeks & Campaigns

- **Cybercrime Week (Feb 2025):** Educating the public on strong password hygiene, two-factor authentications, and phishing risks.
- **Financial Harm Week (Feb 2025):** Raising awareness of scams targeting older people.
- **Shut out Scammers Week (July 2024):** Van-based outreach raising awareness of fraud, rogue traders, and doorstep scams.

3.11 Rural & Agricultural Crime Prevention

- **Agricultural Shows (Shire & Moray):** Engagement with rural communities to promote crime prevention strategies.
- **Neighbourhood Watch & Rural Watch:** Supporting community-led efforts to reduce crime in rural areas.
- **Rural Crime Days:** Monthly engagements with businesses, farmers, and suppliers, to promote crime reduction through tailored security advice (e.g. DNA marking).

3.12 Property & Vehicle Crime Initiatives

- **After Dark Campaign (October 2025):** Focus on vehicle crime, home security, and general safety during darker months.
- **Cycling Events:** Collaboration with bike retailers and event organizers to improve bike security and deter theft.

3.13 INNOVATION IN CRIME PREVENTION

3.14 Financial Crime Triage Hub (FCTH)

3.15 Introduced in 2024, the Financial Crime Triage Hub is a key component of North East Division's response to cyber and financial crime. It monitors and reviews emerging crime types, identifying early trends and vulnerable demographics, enabling timely interventions and coordinated multi-agency responses.

3.16 Key achievements:

- Supported national media campaigns on issues such as counterfeit resale and gift card scams.
- Worked with Microsoft and the financial sector on online safeguarding and account security.

- Produced content for Adult Support and Protection Day, focusing on multi-agency safeguarding.
- Actively engaged in early prevention and evidence-based support for affected individuals.

3.17 A related unit, the Acquisitive Crime Triage Hub (ACTH) formally launched 1 April 2025, is also in early stages. It has already identified 14 distinct crime series (96 reports), spanning multiple divisions. ACTH works closely with Community Policing Teams to target repeat offenders and ensure early intervention.

3.18 PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

3.19 Effective crime prevention relies on strong partnerships. Key collaborative efforts include:

- **Businesses & Universities:** Promoting crime awareness through retail, health, and academic networks.
- **Local Authorities & Trading Standards:** Coordinating efforts against fraud and scams.
- **Neighbourhood Watch Scotland & NFU Scotland:** Supporting rural safety measures.
- **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS):** Joint initiatives on home and business security.

3.20 CASE STUDIES

- **Retail Crime** – Crime Reduction Officers engaged with a number retail stores and Shopping Centres/Complexes which featured as ‘High Targets’ in respect of Theft by Shoplifting and how to prevent crime through target hardening through design intervention, crime mapping of stores, looking at the protection of the most vulnerable and targeted stock, CCTV surveillance and safety advice. Initial results in respect of the advice were positive with a ‘Test of Change’ implemented with a national retailer with advice regarding layout being replicated across Grampian. Crime Reduction Officers also continue to review high profile offenders with consideration of ASBO legislation to restrict movement and reduce offending.
- **Selecta DNA – Vehicle Crime** – Selecta DNA Tagging Spray is used to deter and prevent personal attack and criminal behaviour such as motorcycle enabled crimes and theft of same. In Aberdeen City, Officers, including Road Policing Officers, were trained in the use of tagging spray, which can be aimed by Officers at those riding stolen motorbikes or in an anti-social manner which will mark the bike, clothing and skin of riders and passengers with a

uniquely coded but invisible DNA which can be seen under special handheld lights or within custody facilities. The launch of its use was supplemented with a Top 10 Tips to Prevent Theft and it will be utilised during Operation Armour this year.

- **Mobile phone theft** - Aberdeen City accounted for around 80% of all mobile phone thefts across NE Division with increases in with significant values stolen in the first quarter of 2024. Crime Prevention launched a Summer Smartphone Security Campaign with various tips on keeping the technology safe and tracking. As a result of the campaign, the value of handsets stolen reduced by over 30% with theft of devices remaining low until December where it spiked before refreshed advice resulting in a further reduction for the final quarter of the year with this trend continuing in April 2025.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 North East Division remains committed to a dynamic, intelligence-led approach to crime prevention. Key priorities include:
- **Enhancing digital outreach** to tackle cyber threats.
 - **Expanding fraud prevention roadshows** to support vulnerable groups.
 - **Strengthening partnerships** with businesses and statutory bodies to deliver sustained crime reduction.
- 4.2 The Division's layered approach has proven effective in targeting emerging threats, strengthening community trust, and supporting early intervention. This work remains aligned with national and local priorities, supporting safe, more resilient communities. Moving forward, efforts will focus on evaluating impact, strengthening rural and cyber initiatives, and further embedding collaborative prevention at every level - all to reduce crime across the North East.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no identified financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks			
Compliance	No significant risks			
Operational	No significant risks			
Financial	No significant risks			
Reputational	No significant risks			
Environment / Climate	No significant risks			

9. OUTCOMES

<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>

Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the city.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways.

10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 n/a

12. APPENDICES

12.1 n/a

13. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Martyn Thomson
Title	Inspector, Northeast Division, Police Scotland
Email Address	Local Police Commander inbox, Members use only
Tel	

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing & Public Protection
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Thematic Report - Wilful-Fireraising
REPORT NUMBER	POL/25/117
DIRECTOR	
CHIEF OFFICER	
REPORT AUTHOR	Inspector Martyn Thomson, North East Division, Police Scotland
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.20

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an overview of Wilful Fire-Raising in Aberdeen City and the collaborative approaches with stakeholders in response.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

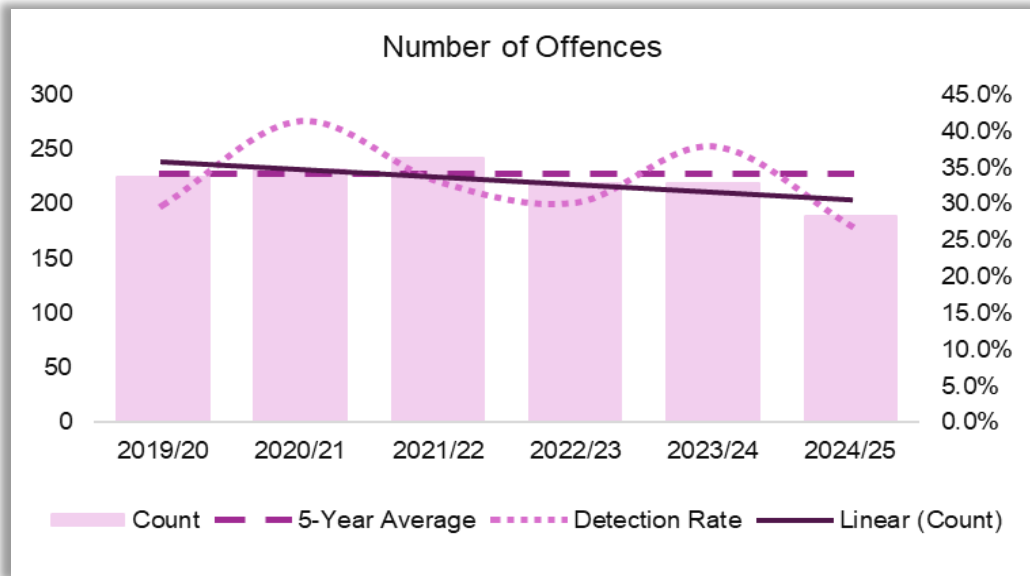
- 2.1 That the Committee: -

Discuss, comment on, and endorse the report.

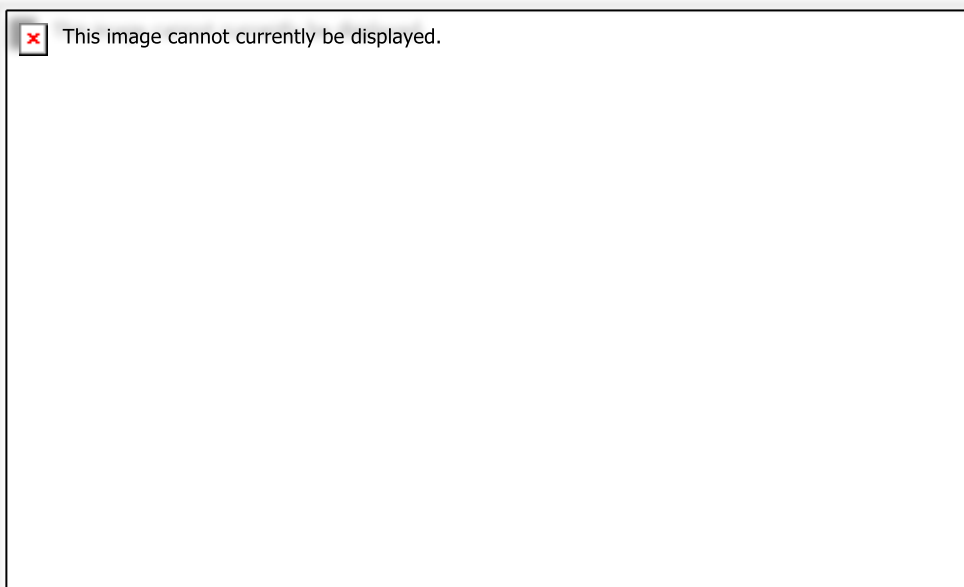
3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Wilful Fire-raising offences across North East Division have followed a consistent downward trend over the last five years (2020 to 2025), aligned with broader force-wide reductions.

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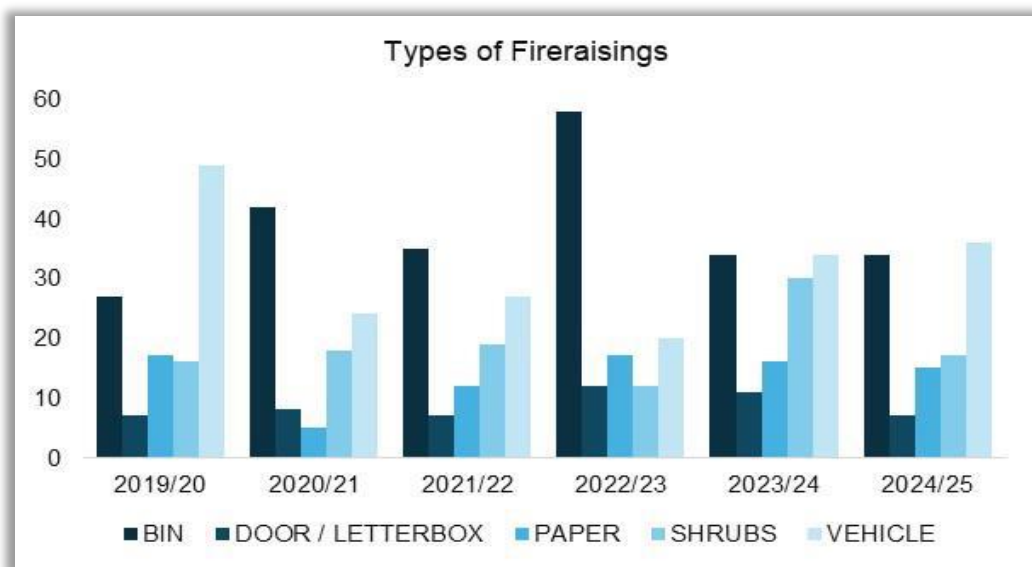


- 3.2 Aberdeen City North (01/04/2024 to 28/02/2025) recorded 49 wilful fire-raising offences during this period, with a five-year average of 62.2 crimes. Aberdeen City South recorded 41 wilful fire-raising related offences, with a five-year average of 58.4 crimes.
- 3.3 Division wide data analysis highlights both seasonal and geographic spikes in offending - particularly during March, June and November - with statistical peaks occurring in late evenings and on Saturdays. This trend appears linked to seasonal behaviours and social activity patterns, which may offer opportunities for targeted preventative work.



3.4 OFFENDER PROFILES IN 2024/25 – NORTH EAST DIVISION

- 75% of reported wilful fire-raising offences involved a single accused.
- Over 80% of accused individuals were male, the majority 18 years and under.
- Analysis highlights a correlation between wilful fire-raising behaviours and wider social issues, including anti-social conduct, educational disengagement, and substance misuse.
- Common targets included bins, shrubs/gorse, paper, letterboxes, and vehicles.



3.5 REPEAT OFFENDING

- 3.6 Five individuals within Aberdeen City were identified as having committed several wilful fire-raising offences (between two and four) during the 2024/25 period. These incidents typically occurred within a narrow geographic radius. A small but persistent cohort of repeat offenders disproportionately impacts local incident rates and strains partnership resources.
- 3.7 All those identified as repeat offenders were reported to either the Procurator Fiscal or Children's Reporter and are currently within the criminal justice process. One option which will be considered as part of sentencing, should individuals be found guilty, is referral to a Fire Safety Education Course run by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, allowing a longer-term prevention approach to be undertaken.

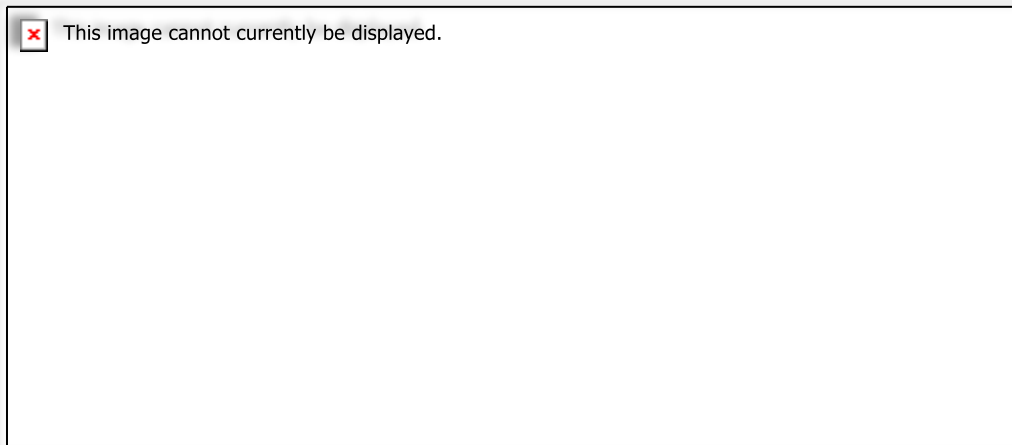
3.8 OPERATIONAL RESPONSES

- **Briefings:** Delivered to frontline officers and community partners to raise awareness and support early intervention efforts.
- **Focused Patrols:** Conducted in affected communities, with active community engagement.
- **Media Messaging:** Public communications aimed at promoting the secure storage of combustible materials to reduce opportunity and risk.
- **Joint Patrols:** Carried out with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), ASBIT, and Community Police Teams.
- **Enhanced Youth Referrals:** Pathways to services and diversionary programmes where appropriate.
- **Education:** SFRS delivers targeted, school-based inputs in areas affected by wilful fire-raising.

Our Youth Engagement Officers were recently involved in the delivery of a Fire Skills course for Northfield Academy students in partnership with SFRS and SAS. Aberdeen Donside MSP Jackie Dunbar was so impressed by the event, delivered over 5 days, that she submitted a motion to the Scottish Government for all involved to be recognised.

3.9 SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CONTEXTUAL INSIGHT

- 3.10 Data provided by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service highlights a positive long-term trend in Aberdeen City, where deliberate fire-raising has fallen below the national 10-year average in recent years. This is supported by trend analysis which shows sustained reductions across all property types, with notable recent decreases in outdoor fires.
- 3.11 The chart below illustrates this downward trend in comparison to national averages:



3.12 SFRS analysis notes that this improvement aligns with collaborative prevention efforts, including:

- **Community education** via the Fire Safety Support and Education Programme (FSSE), particularly for young people involved in wilful fire-raising incidents.
- **Engagement with high-rise building management** regarding malicious activations.
- **Fire safety equipment intervention** post incident.
- **Joint Police-SFRS Patrols.**

3.13 These proactive, intelligence-led measures are viewed as critical enablers of Aberdeen City's sustained reduction in deliberate fire-raising.

3.14 GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISON: ABERDEENSHIRE AND MORAY

3.15 Comparative analysis shows that wilful fire-raising is less prevalent in Aberdeenshire and Moray than in Aberdeen City. This disparity is likely due to differences in rural composition, and population density.

3.16 Notably, while Moray's overall figures remain low, isolated increases in fire-raising activity have been observed - primarily in urban centres such as Elgin. These localised spikes underscore the importance of place-based analysis to inform targeted preventions and resource deployment.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Fire-raising offences across North East Division have shown a consistent downward trend over the past five years, reflecting the effectiveness of targeted prevention, early intervention, and collaborative working.

- 4.2 While social media commentary can amplify community concern, the actual incidence of wilful fire-raising in Aberdeen City remains below the national average and continues a downward trend. This highlights the importance of data-led insight over perception driven narratives.
- 4.3 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service data confirms that fire-raising levels in Aberdeen City have remained below the national 10-year average, with significant reductions in outdoor fire incidents. This highlights the impact of sustained joint strategic interventions.
- 4.4 Multi-agency actions - such as joint patrols, post-incident checks, education initiatives, and Hub-based case discussions - has supported early risk identification, youth diversion, and the safeguarding of vulnerable communities.
- 4.5 Despite this progress, wilful fire-raising remains a persistent, localised issue within Aberdeen City, demanding continued vigilance. A sustained emphasis on intelligence-sharing, early intervention, and place-based activity will be critical to maintain momentum, minimising harm, and reinforcing public confidence.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?

Strategic Risk	No significant risks			
Compliance	No significant risks			
Operational	No significant risks			
Financial	No significant risks			
Reputational	No significant risks			
Environment / Climate	No significant risks			

9. OUTCOMES

<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the city.

Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways.
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10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Not applicable

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Not applicable

13. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Martyn Thomson
Title	Inspector, North East Division, Police Scotland
Email Address	Local Police Commander inbox, Members use only

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Page 59

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing & Public Protection
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Thematic Report – Community Safety – Dog Related Incidents
REPORT NUMBER	POL/25/118
DIRECTOR	
CHIEF OFFICER	
REPORT AUTHOR	Inspector Mark Young, North East Division, Police Scotland
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.20

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides the Committee with an overview of legislation, current process and procedures, and data in respect of incidents and offences relating to Dangerous Dogs and Banned Breeds.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Discuss, comment on, and endorse the report.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 North East Division, in collaboration with stakeholders, manages the risks relating to dangerous dogs through the implementation of strategies, policies, and measures to enhance public safety, provide community reassurance and take the most appropriate action in respect of owners and offenders.
- 3.2 On 23 February 2024, XL Bully Dogs were added to the list of banned breeds within the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 with it being illegal to own an XL Bully type dog without an exemption certificate from 31 July 2024. It is mandatory for all legally held XL Bully Type Dogs to.
 - Be microchipped and neutered.
 - Have third party insurance in place.

- When in a public place they must be muzzled and kept on a lead at all times.

3.3 PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

- 3.4 Given public interest, increased reporting, the necessity to collate information to assess/mitigate risk and provide community reassurance, Community Safety Partnership Officers within Aberdeen City identify all dog related incidents/crime reports daily and share information with partners in order that the information can be enhanced, risk can be assessed and incidents allocated to the most appropriate agency.
- 3.5 In addition to partners within the Community Safety Partnership, Aberdeen City Police Officers also have direct contact with the Local Area Dog Warden (or Animal Welfare Officer).
- 3.6 The sharing of information and joint investigations ensures the most appropriate action can be taken by the most appropriate agency and employing the model of Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce where necessary with Police Scotland and LADW having a range of options including Dog Control Notices to seizure of dogs and report submission to COPFS.
- 3.7 Community Safety Officers have access to Exemption Certification List and DCNs across Scotland.
- 3.8 There are currently several kennelling facilities across Scotland used to care for seized dogs and look after their welfare. There is a requirement to formalise the facilities and as such procurement is ongoing.

3.9 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.10 It should be noted that not all incidents involving dogs (excluding Banned Breeds) being dangerously out of control will result in criminality being recorded and as such, information held, and further enquiries conducted by Police and LADW leads to most appropriate action. There is a requirement to evidence grounds of reasonable apprehension that the dog may injure person whether or not actual injury is inflicted. This will dictate the most appropriate course of action.
- 3.11 Banned Breeds are involved, Police Scotland will take primacy.
- 3.12 Each incident involving Dangerous Dogs is assessed on its own merits with appropriate risk assessment conducted for ongoing and not ongoing incidents taking cognisance of location, spontaneity and pre planning with support provided to Local Policing through Specialist Officers and Tactical Advisors.
- 3.13 In all instances, Police Scotland and partners will maximise the safety of the public and minimise risk to Officers and other agencies whilst providing

community reassurance, support victims and also support responsible owners who have been affected by legislative changes.

- 3.14 Where Banned Breeds, including XL Bullies, have been dangerously out of control, the animal will be seized and transported by Specialist Police resource and cared for within a kennelling facility (locations not disclosable) until they are typed and trial concluded. All reports to COPFS are submitted within Custody Report timescales. Owners can and have authorised euthanasia on seizure.
- 3.15 Where information or intelligence indicates that owners of Banned Breeds have no exemption certificate or owners are failing to follow legislative requirements, Police Officers, in consultation with partners, will assess if there is a requirement for the dog to be seized.
- 3.16 Officers will consider the temperament of the dog including history, environment in which it is located, welfare of the animal and owner suitability including history, willingness to engage and understanding of legislation. The decision to seize a dog or leave it in the community will be ratified by an Officer of Inspector Rank or above.
- 3.17 Where a dog poses any risk to the public it will be seized.
- 3.18 It should be highlighted that at this time, where incidents are suspected to involve XL Bullies, COPFS require the dog to be 'typed' to ensure it is banned under the legislation.
- 3.19 There are currently no Dog Legislation Officers employed by Police Scotland; however, assistance is gained through DLOs from other Police Services in England through mutual aid. Arrangements are in place through the Local Policing Programme to ensure efficiency in dog typing whilst Police Scotland look to address this skills gap nationally.

3.20 DATA

- 3.21 From a review of the Exemption Database there are in excess of 3300 Exemption Certificates in Scotland with 278 registered to Aberdeen City Postcodes.
- 3.22 Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 there were 50 Crime Records in Aberdeen City with offences relating to Dogs Dangerously out of Control (33), Dog in Public Place without lead or muzzle (12), Possessed out with the Accordance of their Licence (3) or Gift Dog (2). From these crime records it should be highlighted.
 - 9 Crime Records were closed as No Crime after appropriate enquiries had been conducted with Dog in Public Place without lead for muzzle accounting for 4 and Dog Dangerously out of Control accounting for 5.

- From the 41 remaining Crime Records, 31 are Detected, 2 are Undetected with No Further Lines of Enquiry and 8 enquiries remain Live with further enquiries continuing.
- There were 43 different loci in respect of incidents with 4 locations featuring multiple charges.
- XL Bullies feature in 13 Crime Records with 7 recorded as Dogs Dangerously out of Control and 6 offences linked to exemption conditions. In total 10 individually identified XL Bullies are detailed however it should be noted 1 Crime Record was No Crime and 3 remain as Live and under investigation.
- 4 XL Bullies were euthanised by owners when offences were identified.
- All other crime records (37) detail non banned breeds.

3.23 When compared to previous years.

- 2023/2024 – 38 Crime Records – Dog Dangerously Out of Control (37) and Dog in Public Place without lead or muzzle (1). 21 Detected, 10 Undetected and 7 No Crime. These records do not detail any banned breeds.
- 2022/2023 – 32 Crime Records – Dog Dangerously out of Control (32). 15 Detected, 9 Undetected and 8 No Crime. These records do not detail any banned breeds.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 A collaborative approach to tackling incidents involving Dangerous Dogs and Banned Breeds has provided reassurance to Aberdeen City communities that information relating to same is acted upon and proportionately dealt with based on circumstance presented.
- 4.2 North East Division continues to work and liaise with national departments to ensure Specialist Resource, including DLO, can be obtained for efficient capture of evidence to allow COPFS to make decisions on proceeding whilst considering the wellbeing of victims, owners and animals involved.
- 4.3 Data indicates an increase from the previous year's however this is explained due a change in legislation and XL Bullies being classed as Banned Breeds with the number of Dogs Dangerously out of control having a nominal change with the majority detected, risk mitigated, and several enquiries identified no criminality.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks			
Compliance	No significant risks			
Operational	No significant risks			
Financial	No significant risks			

Reputational	No significant risks			
Environment / Climate	No significant risks			

9. OUTCOMES

<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the city.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways.

10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 n/a

12. APPENDICES

12.1 n/a

13. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Tel	

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee
DATE	27 th May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Building Standards Activity Report
REPORT NUMBER	CR&E/25/114
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	Grant Tierney
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.7 and 2.8

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide assurance and an overview of the Council's responsibilities in relation to securing dangerous buildings and protecting public safety, as well as activity on unauthorised building work and unauthorised occupation of buildings.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the contents of the report and appendix and
- 2.2 agrees to receive a further Building Standards Activity Report at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 11th November 2025.

3. Current Situation

- 3.1 Aberdeen City Council act as the verifier to administer the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 which is intended to secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings. In addition, the Building Standards team complete enforcement duties under the above Act with the

objective of protecting the public from harm caused by buildings. This report provides an update to the committee following a report to this Committee on 21st November 2024 which covered the reporting period of April 2024 to September 2024. This report covers the period 1st October 2024 to 31st March 2025.

3.2 Details of formal and non-formal enforcement activity can be found in Appendix 1 relating to:

- Public safety and dangerous buildings
- Unauthorised building work; and
- Unauthorised occupation of buildings without a completion certificate

Where informal discussions with an owner do not result in a speedy resolution to remove a danger to the public, a Notice will be served to set a deadline for resolution for completion of any necessary work. Where the deadline is exceeded, the Local Authority can complete the necessary work and seek expenses from the owner.

During this reporting period, October 2024 – March 2025, there have been no major incidents requiring significant intervention by Building Standards for example, evacuation of a tenement building or fatal accident inquiry. Five notices were served during the period, two of these were for fire damaged buildings located at Union Street and Merkland Road East, two notices requiring owners to secure their properties in the Bridge of Don and Great Northern Road and one notice requiring the owner to address a defective boundary wall at their property in Elmbank.

3.3 Once a notice is served requiring the owner to reduce or remove the danger posed by the building, there is a statutory period of 21 days to allow the owner to appeal the notice. Thereafter, there is an expiry date by which the owner must meet the terms of the notice.

During the period of the notice, Building Standards staff continue to liaise with the owner of building regarding the terms of the notice. Building Standards staff continue to monitor and inspect buildings that are subject to a live notice to maintain public safety until the notice can be closed.

3.4 It should be noted that these activities do not have targets or performance measures as each case is dealt with in accordance with the Regulators Code of Conduct supported by the Building Standards Enforcement Charter.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The costs of verification and enforcement activities undertaken are included in the Building Standards revenue budget. There are no increased financial implications in relation to on-going activities.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	None			
Compliance	Failing to meet statutory obligations in terms of public safety.	Dangerous building processes and procedures established. 24 hour on call service established. Regular staff training and lessons learned sessions.	M	Yes
Operational	Sufficient qualified staff to provide the service	Competency assessment for all staff. Regular staff training and lessons learned sessions. Eight members of staff operate the dangerous building call out.	L	Yes
Financial	Potential increase in work completed by Building Standards.	Legislation permits monies to be retrieved from owners of buildings.	L	Yes

Reputational	Delay in processing building warrant applications.	Management of resources system in place.	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	None			

8. OUTCOMES

The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.

UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	<p>The report provides evidence which fulfils the requirements placed upon the Council by the Building (Scotland) Act 2003;</p> <p>Section 27 – Building Warrant Enforcement Notice Section 28 - Defective Building Notice Section 29 and 30 – Dangerous Buildings Notices</p>
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with, David Dunne, Chief Officer, Strategic Place Planning on 21/04/2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – Building Standards Activity

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1 – Building Standards Activity

Period 01/10/24 – 31/03/25	Live Notices at start of period	Notices Served during period	Notices Closed during period	Live Notices at end of period
Public Safety and Dangerous Buildings	19	5	2	22
Unauthorised Building Work	5	0	0	5
Unauthorised Occupation of Buildings	0	0	0	0

Number of visits resulting in formal or informal action	24 visits
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For information – a Notice is principally served in 2 instances:

1. When negotiations seeking a speedy resolution to removing a danger have failed e.g. informal action
2. When a building has suffered a substantial incident and requires a higher degree of control to maintain public safety e.g. fire damaged.

Once a Notice is served, there is a statutory period of 21 days to allow an owner to appeal the notice. Thereafter, there is an expiry date by which the terms of the Notice must be met.

Building Standards site inspections have been maintained during the trial of hybrid working patterns, the provision of 24-hour emergency dangerous building call out which is deemed a critical service remains unaffected. Call outs are generated through the Regional Call Centre reacting to reports from members of the public or the emergency services of a potentially dangerous building. A suitably qualified officer responds by making a site visit and assessing any necessary action to secure public safety.

Building Standards staff continue to liaise with owners of buildings which are subject of a live notice, continuing to monitor the live notices and maintain public safety.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2025/2026
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/026
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Alan Thomson/Vikki Cuthbert
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrea Carson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.2 and 1.1.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019 requires Local Authorities to prepare an annual Service Plan which details the intended activity of the Service based on the resources allocated.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Approves the Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2025/2026 as detailed in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Notes the review of performance against the Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2024/2025 contained within Appendix 2 of the Service Plan 2025/2026.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Food enforcement services provided by Aberdeen City Council are located in Protective Services, a city-wide service within Governance. The majority of food enforcement work takes place within the Commercial Section of this Service. Officers are also involved in the provision of Elementary Food Hygiene Training, enforcement of health and safety, port health, licensing and animal health & welfare.
- 3.2 There continues to be a backlog of interventions, following a period of disruption during the Covid 19 Pandemic, which is being exacerbated by a national shortage of suitably qualified officers to carry out this work. The backlog is not

unique to Aberdeen City and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) are working on a Scottish Authority Food Enforcement Re-build (SAFER) programme, related to food law delivery across the 32 Scottish Local Authorities, highlighting the challenges of maintaining a professional workforce, funding of the service; and current and future difficulties being faced.

- 3.3 Despite the challenges all the high risk inspections due in the 2024-2025 year were undertaken on time.
- 3.4 Over the last couple of years three Trainee Authorised officers have been recruited to address this staffing shortfall and a fourth will commence employment in June. In addition to this, another newly appointed Authorised Officer is currently training to become an Environmental Health Officer. This will assist the service to continue to meet the requirements of the Service Plan.
- 3.5 Interventions will continue to be prioritised in accordance with the Interventions Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) and with the available staff resource. Those interventions in higher priority/risk groups will be addressed first, along with those where valid complaints have been received by the Service.
- 3.6 The inspection programme is prepared monthly and issued to officers. In months where there are less high-risk inspections due, inspections in the backlog are allocated along with newly registered businesses which allows the risk category of the new establishments to be determined. The frequency of interventions is detailed in the Service Plan at Section 3.1.1.
- 3.7 Local authorities are required by the 'Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019' to prepare a Service Plan and review their performance against it on an annual basis.
- 3.8 FSS sees the Service Plan as an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards of food enforcement are addressed and delivered locally. Service plans also:
 - a. Focus debates on key delivery issues.
 - b. Provide an essential link with financial planning.
 - c. Set objectives for the future, and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
 - d. Provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons.
- 3.9 FSS suggests a common format for Food Regulatory Service Plans to assist local authorities in performance reviews under the Best Value regime.
- 3.10 The power to set standards, monitor and audit the performance of enforcement authorities was conferred on FSS by Sections 3 and 25 of the Food (Scotland) Act 2015 and Regulation 7 of the Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009. FSS has established external audit arrangements intended to ensure competent authorities are providing an effective and consistent service for the delivery of official controls and are meeting the general criteria

laid out in Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017.

- 3.10 FSS has powers, following consultation with the Scottish Ministers, to issue a direction to a local authority requiring it to take specified steps to comply with the Code of Practice issued.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Currently the service as proposed within the Regulatory Service Plan can be provided within the existing budget.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019 is issued under section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990, Regulation 24 of the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and Regulation 6 of the Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009 which empowers the Scottish Ministers to issue Codes of Practice concerning the execution and enforcement of Food Law by Food Authorities.
- 5.2 In exercise of the functions conferred on it by or under the Food Safety Act 1990, the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and the Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009, every food authority shall have regard to any relevant provision of any such code of recommended practice issued under the aforementioned legislation; and shall comply with any direction which is issued which requires the food authority to take any specified steps in order to comply with such a code. Any direction shall, on the application of the FSS, be enforceable in Scotland by an order of the Court of Session under section 45 of the Court of Session Act 1988.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained in the table below is considered to be consistent with the Councils Risk Appetite Statement

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Unable to deliver service due to acute	Business continuity plans in place to continue key service provision	L	Yes

	disruptive events			
Compliance	<p>ACC is bound by statute to deliver a food law enforcement service, including the provision of a service plan.</p> <p>FSS may, after consulting with Scottish Ministers, direct a Food Authority requiring it to take any specified steps to comply with the requirements of food law or Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019.</p> <p>Due to resource shortages it is not possible to fulfil all the requirements of the Code of Practice</p>	<p>Deliver a food law enforcement service, including the provision of a Service Plan.</p> <p>Interventions are planned in accordance with available staffing resource. Those higher priority/risk groups will be addressed first, along with those where valid complaints have been received by the Service</p>	L	Yes
Operational	Qualified officers not	Only qualified officers undertake regulatory	M	Yes

	available to carry out interventions	duties. Risk prioritisation of interventions when insufficient officers available. Appropriate training, needs identified through CR+D ,121 discussions, effective management of staff workloads, achievable targets within the Service Plan		
Financial	<p>Failure to produce and deliver a service plan could contribute to default powers being exercised and the associated costs.</p> <p>FSS may, after consulting with Scottish Ministers, direct a Food Authority requiring it to take any specified steps to comply with the requirements of food law or Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland)</p>	Produce and deliver against the Service Plan.	L	Yes

	2019. FSS may recover any reasonable expenses incurred by them from the defaulting local authority.			
Reputational	Failure to produce and deliver a Service Plan could contribute to default powers being exercised and the associated reputational damage.	Produce and deliver against the Service Plan.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

The proposals in this report have a positive impact on the Council's Delivery Plan.

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:</p> <p>A Prosperous City, delivering an interventions programme that assists to stimulate sustainable economic development in the food business sector</p>
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposals in this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 2- . Working towards 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026

	Conducting an interventions programme and providing advice and support to people starting up new food related businesses will assist them to comply with the relevant legislation. This reduces the risk to them as individuals of criminal proceedings and/or litigation and secures public protection. New business start-ups are beneficial to the economy as a whole.
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Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the Regional Economic Strategy by assisting local businesses to thrive and prosper by providing advice to ensure compliance with relevant legislation. Assistance is also provided by the Service in the form of certification to ensure that businesses can trade globally.
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to The Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan has been reviewed and changes made.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019

11. APPENDICES

11.1 **Appendix A:** Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2025/2026

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE PLAN 2025/2026

Introduction

Definition of the Statutory Food Regulatory Function

In January 2006 European Legislation came into force which applied directly to food businesses in the UK and the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 provided the framework for the EU legislation to be enforced in Scotland.

The United Kingdom (UK) left the European Union on 31 January 2020 and in accordance with the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK is now officially a third country to the EU. EU Food Law has become part of the legal framework and is referred to as assimilated law.

The principal objective of the general and specific hygiene rules is to ensure a high level of consumer protection with regard to food safety.

An integrated approach is necessary to ensure food safety from the place of primary production up to and including placing the items on the market.

The legislation falls into two broad areas of 'Food Standards' and 'Food Safety'.

Food Standards relates to issues of description, labelling and composition of food. This legislation is aimed at ensuring that consumers are not misled and can make informed choices founded on basic information contained in labelling or advertisements about the type and composition of food for sale.

Food Safety relates to the safety of food supplied for human consumption at all points after harvesting/slaughter. The term applies both to the condition of the food itself and to the conditions under which it is handled prior to consumption. Local Authorities have a statutory role in the enforcement of legislation that is intended to ensure the hygienic handling of food and the safety of the final product in terms of its wholesomeness and fitness for consumption.

Food safety and food standards are addressed by means of a single Food Law Intervention, introduced in July 2019 by The Interventions Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019.

The term 'enforcement' is not restricted to the use of legal sanctions to achieve the aims of the legislation. 'Enforcement' is also taken to include:

1. The provision of advice about the application and interpretation of legislation.
2. The provision of advice about best practice.
3. Encouragement of food businesses to achieve compliance and adopt good practice through awareness raising promotion, education and provision of feedback.
4. Raising the awareness of consumers about safe food handling practices and about how to interpret labelling and descriptions of food in order to make informed choices.
5. Partnership arrangements with the business and voluntary sectors and other agencies.

Formal enforcement options include:

1. The use of enforcement notice procedures to require improvements to safety controls or prohibit or limit any dangerous operations.
2. The power to seize or detain unfit food.
3. In certain cases, the regulation of activities through a system of prior approval.
4. Reporting matters to the Procurator Fiscal with a view to instigating prosecution.

The circumstances under which these options are judged appropriate are set out in the Food Safety Enforcement Protocol and associated Enforcement Guidance.

The actions associated with enforcement are concerned with the monitoring of food law performance through the following:

1. Intervention and audit of food handling and manufacturing operations and processes.
2. Investigation of consumer complaints.
3. Sampling of food.
4. Investigation of issues passed on by other food authorities or Food Standards Scotland (FSS).
5. Investigation of cases of food-borne disease.
6. Review of guidance issued to businesses in the light of technical or legislative developments.

The term *food business* used in this report includes food provided by the voluntary sector, public sector and non-profit making organisations.

The Council also offers a service providing export certification for food manufactured or processed in the City in appropriate cases.

Key Partnership Agencies

FSS oversee the enforcement process relating to food law in order to ensure that good practice is promoted and employed consistently between authorities. FSS also has powers to direct food authorities in the conduct of enforcement activities and to implement ministerial directives. One major area of joint involvement with food authorities is in the co-ordination and dissemination of 'Alerts' and similar notices. These are divided into four categories:

1. Food Alerts For Action (FAFAs)
2. Product Withdrawal Information Notices (PWINs)
3. Product Recall Information Notices (PRINs)
4. Allergy Alerts

FSS issues a 'Product Withdrawal Information Notice' or a 'Product Recall Information Notice' to let local authorities and consumers know about problems associated with food and are issued where a solution to the problem has been put in place – e.g., the product has been, or is being, withdrawn from sale or recalled from consumers.

Allergy Alerts are issued when a matter is identified that poses a risk to consumers with a specific allergy or intolerance.

'Food Alerts for Action' provide local authorities with details of specific action to be taken on behalf of consumers and are often issued in conjunction with a product withdrawal or recall by a manufacturer, retailer or distributor.

These warnings are issued to Food Authorities via e-mail.

FSS is responsible for the enforcement of food safety regulations at approved abattoirs, meat cutting establishments and catering butchers. Local authorities are generally responsible for all other aspects of food law enforcement in Scotland. NHS Grampian and the Local Authorities within Grampian have a responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious disease including food borne disease. A local Infectious Disease Incident Plan has been produced and outlines in detail the roles and responsibilities shared by the various organisations included within the plan; this is reviewed periodically. NHS Grampian provides a designated medical officer (Consultant in Public Health Medicine (Communicable Disease/Environmental Health)) to the Local Authority and has powers to exclude individuals, who present a public health risk, from work or school.

1. Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Food Regulatory Service is to protect public health, consumer interests and consumer confidence with respect to the safety, composition, description and labelling of food. This aim is pursued through a mix of interventions that include:

- a) Intervention, partial intervention, audit; both programmed preventative visits and visits in response to complaints and enquires.
- b) Verification, to ensure specified requirements have been fulfilled at establishments
- c) Education, which includes advice given during interventions as well as the provision of education, training and the general promotion of food safety and food standards issues.
- d) Intelligence, which includes the gathering of information through food sampling, monitoring technological/legislative changes and inter-authority/ agency communication.

The main objectives of these enforcement approaches are:

- Improvement in hygiene practices and standards within food business establishments.
- The prevention of the causes and spread of food-borne disease.
- The removal of unsafe food from the food chain.
- The prevention of illegal and unfair trading practices.

A set of written procedures is in place detailing the way in which the Service is provided. These procedures are reviewed and updated as necessary.

The Service has seen a significant increase in the number of new businesses registering over the last few years and has been assisting them and ensuring they have the necessary information to allow them to trade safely. The full scope of the service provided is set out in Section 2.3.

1.2 Linkage to Corporate Aims and Objectives

The Service has a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce who make best use of the financial resources available, delivering improvement in the specific service priorities in the most cost-effective manner. The Service is provided via a hybrid model of working between home and office.

1.3 Links to Community Planning Aberdeen– Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26

This Food Regulatory Service Plan contributes to helping all people, families, businesses and communities to do well, succeed and flourish. In addition, it supports internationalisation by assisting businesses that export food from the City allowing them to benefit from international trade and investment opportunities.

Furthermore, the Plan helps to ensure that Aberdeen is a place where everyone feels safe by regulating businesses that produce food.

People who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety, mental and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not.

2. Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Aberdeen City Council is an urban port authority with a population of approximately 227,400. The City is the main port for the oil industry within Europe and retains a significant, if diminishing, fishing industry.

A moderate fish processing business sector exists, however the authority is no longer served by a fish auction market. There is also a meat products factory within the City. Additionally, the City has a diverse catering sector producing a wide range of traditional and ethnic meals, the majority of which are contained within the city centre area. The City also has a thriving airport and seaport. The South Harbour is able to accommodate large cruise ships and several are expected throughout the year.

2.2 Organisational Structure

The Food Regulatory Service

The food regulatory service is provided from within the Environmental Health Commercial Section of Protective Services within Corporate Governance by authorised officers that includes Environmental Health Officers, Authorised Officers and a Compliance Officer.

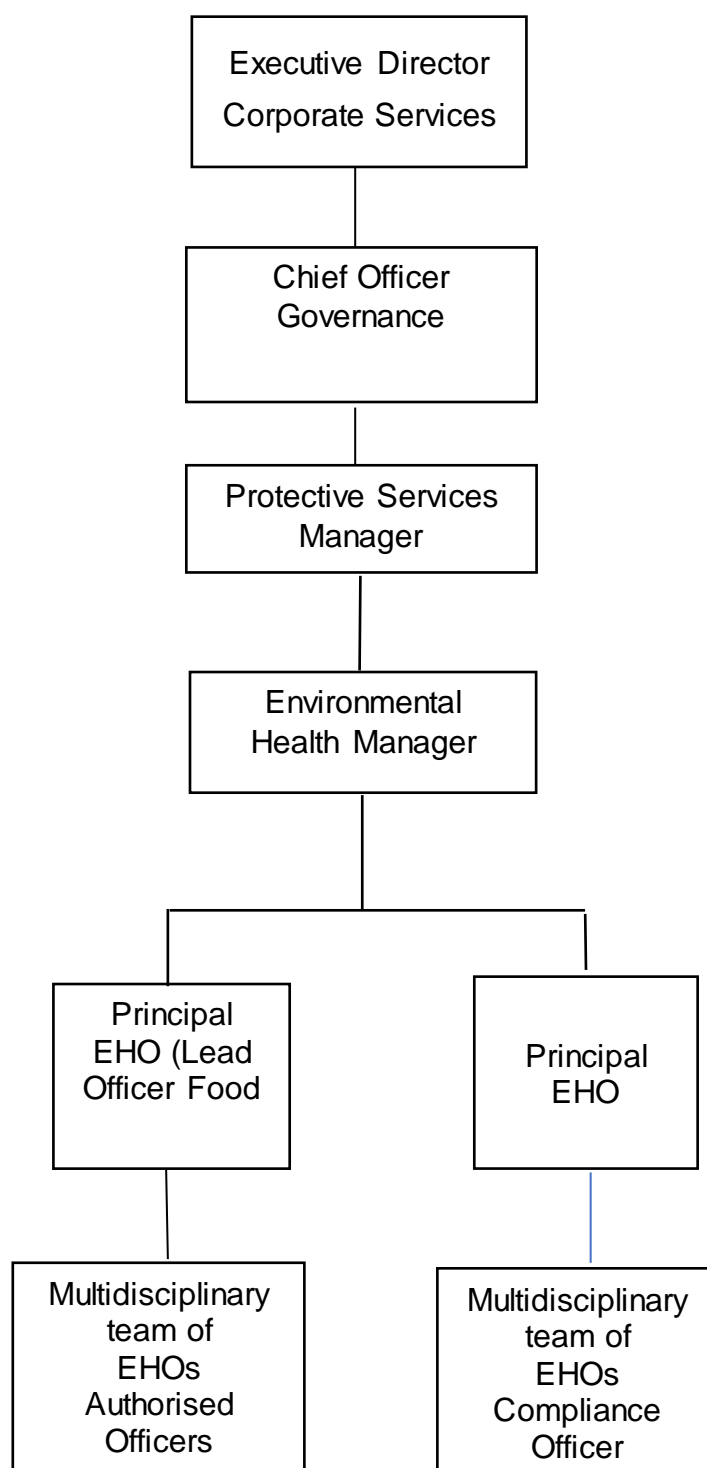
There is currently one Trainee Authorised Officer in the team who is due to qualify in Autumn 2025. The Service has also recruited a second trainee Authorised Officer who will commence in June 2025. In addition an authorised officer is presently training to become an Environmental Health Officer.

The Service established the permanent post of Compliance Officer, to assist the team in service delivery of statutory duties that do not necessitate the need for an Environmental Health Officer (EHO)/Authorised Officer (AO).

Officers are also involved in delivering Elementary Food Hygiene Training, the enforcement of health and safety, port health and animal health & welfare. The section also has responsibility for liaison with the Licensing Board and Licensing Committee and for liaison over building warrant applications with a view to providing advice on Environmental Health issues.

There is a corporate proposal to reduce the number of working hours per week from 37 to 35 for a full time officer. The reduction in hours will have an impact on the resource available to deliver the service as it equates to 12 less working days per year per officer.

The Service structure is detailed below:



2.3 Committee Structure

Food law matters are currently reported to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.

2.4 Scope of the Food Service

The authority has responsibility for the provision of food law enforcement protection services covering approximately 2800 food businesses. Table 1 illustrates the number and type of food businesses within Aberdeen City.

It is not possible to predict accurately the number of food businesses that will be operating within the City during 2025/2026 however considering the figures for the last few years it can be assumed that there will be a slight increase in the number of caterers during the year.

Table 1: Number and Type of Food Businesses within Aberdeen City

Food business Type	Establishments
	1 April 2025
Primary Producers	8
Manufacturers & Packers	42
Importers/Exporters	4
Distributors/Transporters	39
Retailers	714
Restaurant & Caterers	1985
Fishing Vessels	7
Total	2799

The principal responsibility is the intervention and audit of these establishments, however there is also responsibility to investigate food complaints relating to the safety or standards of food sold from these establishments. This includes a responsibility to investigate, where appropriate, on behalf of other enforcement agencies under the Home Authority Principle.

Officers in the Service are multifunctional and deal with matters relating to Food, Health and Safety, Licensing, Port Health and Animal Health and Welfare.

The Authority also has responsibility for co-ordinating a monitoring and surveillance programme for foods produced in the area and the Council's Aberdeen Scientific Services, based at the Hutton Institute, provide Public Analyst services related to food analysis and examination.

2.5 Demands on the Food Service

2.5.1 General

Provision of service delivery is constrained by the availability of qualified officers.

The Service is addressing this shortfall through a training program. This involves recruitment of trainees, who undertake practical training, in the Service, to develop skills and knowledge and prepare to undertake final examinations required to meet the professional qualification requirements and be eligible to become an Authorised Officer.

Aberdeen will be a host port for the Tall Ships Race in 2025 which will cause supplementary demand on the Service. There will be no extra resource available to deal with this event and routine work will be closely managed and prioritised accordingly around this time. It may be the case that some high-risk inspections have to be postponed to accommodate regulation of event related activities; due to limited resources there are no mitigation measures that can be put in place to prevent this. The Tall Ships Race will be the largest free family event in Europe and will take place between 19 and 22 July; it is expected to attract 400,000 visitors along with an influx of food vendors not normally resident in the City.

2.5.2 Food Establishment Profile

The number of approved fish processing establishments is a particular feature of demand in the area. In addition, requests for export certificates for fishery products are a complementary aspect of the overall international trade in fish and fish products. The City also contains a high concentration of large 'superstore' retail outlets which serve a significant number of consumers beyond the Aberdeen City boundary.

The City has a comparatively small number of major manufacturers outside the fish processing sector.

All local authorities have responsibility for imported food controls to ensure that imported food is safe and complies with EU and UK requirements. Significant amounts of food of non-animal origin will not have been physically checked at ports of entry and products of animal origin may be illegally imported. Some additional import controls have been introduced in the UK and resources will continue to be allocated to this area during routine interventions.

2.5.3 Approved Establishments

Establishments producing products of animal origin must adhere to specific health rules and require approval under specialist legislation.

Currently there are 28 approved establishments in the City. These are categorised as follows:

Fishery products	23	establishments
Meat products	2	establishments
Cold Stores	3	establishments

The Service will continue to implement Official Control Verification (OCV) undertaking an enhanced approach to the inspection and auditing of approved establishments and other manufacturers. This enhanced approach provides greater scrutiny and therefore an increased level of assurance in establishments to produce safe food. This has been identified as a crucial piece of work to support businesses retaining access to export markets especially those in the EU. This approach will continue in the year 2025/2026 and will require resource to be redirected from lower risk activities.

2.5.4 Export Health Certificates

An Export Health Certificate (EHC) is required for all consignments of Products of Animal Origin, (for Aberdeen based businesses, primarily fish and fishery products) being exported from the UK, except for direct landings of product from UK registered fishing vessels to EU ports.

EHCs provide assurances regarding the health and hygiene standards of products for export and were previously only required for UK exports to third countries. There is no statutory requirement to provide these certificates however businesses are unable to trade without them. Certificates can only be signed by suitably qualified enforcement officers, or appropriately authorised veterinarians.

Demand for EHCs fluctuates, approximately 70 are issued per annum and includes certificates for products being exported to EU and non-EU Countries. Depending on the number of requests resources may have to be directed from elsewhere.

2.5.5 Primary Production

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs applies to primary producers of food and is executed and enforced in Scotland by the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Primary production is the rearing or growing of primary products including harvesting, fishing, milking and farmed animal production prior to slaughter.

The frequency of primary production food hygiene inspections undertaken is determined by risk assessment as described in Annex 10 of The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland). Membership of a recognised farm assured scheme

is factored into the risk assessment as it may help the business to comply with hygiene requirements.

The primary production enforcement regime applies only to land based agricultural activities; arable, horticulture and livestock including farmed game. It does not include dairy, egg, fish or shellfish production. Due to the small number of these establishments in the Aberdeen area very few require to be inspected annually.

2.5.6 Service delivery points

Officers continue to work to a hybrid model using both home and the office as bases. Businesses and the public can make contact via email or telephone and these are the most favoured routes rather than direct face to face contact in the Council Offices. The general philosophy is that the Service is taken to the client in relation to intervention of businesses or public contact.

The Service can be accessed between the hours of 8:30am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday. Telephone calls made outside these hours are dealt with by the Contact Centre. At weekends and evenings an Environmental Health duty officer is on standby for emergencies. The Service can also be reached at any time via e-mail, although e-mails will only normally be accessed, by officers, during office working hours.

2.5.7 Enforcement Protocol

The Food Law Enforcement Protocol is currently being updated.

3. Service Delivery

3.1 Food Establishment Interventions

The requirement to conduct periodic inspections of food business establishments using a risk-based approach is derived from EC Regulations, Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 and the Food Law Code of Practice in respect of legislation relating to Scotland.

Standards of food hygiene and safety for businesses in the European Community are set out in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs. These contain both structural and operational requirements that apply to all food businesses. Additional requirements for food businesses that must obtain approval in relation to the production of products of animal origin are contained in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004, and microbiological requirements for foods are contained in Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 of 15 November 2005.

A Code of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990, Regulation 24 of the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and Regulation 6 of the Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations

2009, together with associated practice guidance and industry guides assist enforcement authorities in performing their duties. The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) was revised in 2019 and is currently being reviewed.

Interventions

Interventions are defined within the Code of Practice as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment. They include, but are not restricted to official controls, which are defined at Article 2(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017.

Methods for carrying out tasks described as official controls are specified in Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017.

These include: -

- Monitoring,
- Surveillance,
- Verification
- Audit,
- Inspection
- Sampling and Analyses

Non-official controls are: -

- Education, advice and coaching
- Information and intelligence gathering

The majority of official controls are undertaken unannounced. However, in some circumstances an appointment may be necessary. For example, if the business is a domestic establishment or successive attempts to gain access have been unsuccessful.

3.1.1 Frequency of Interventions

The Food Law Rating Scheme has inspection frequencies ranging from one month to three years; depending on levels of compliance and business type. Resources will continue to be focused and prioritised on dealing with high-risk businesses.

Interventions will take place at a minimum frequency determined by an interventions risk rating assigned at the last inspection/intervention (where resources allow) and data is recorded on Civica APP, the Management

Information System (MIS). This date can be bought forward if a problem has been identified (e.g. through a complaint investigation, notification of an issue from another authority, poor sampling result etc.). Where increased risk is identified the intervention rating may be reconsidered along with the appropriateness of the next planned intervention.

Interventions are planned so that they are carried out by the due date.

The number of inspections is currently anticipated to be as per table 2 below. This figure will be subject to in year changes as a result of inspections being due more than once in a year; new businesses starting operations and other businesses ceasing operations. It is anticipated that a significant number of premises, estimated around 20%, will require one or more revisits following the initial intervention under the current rating scheme.

Table 2: Predicted Number of Inspections 1st April 25- 31st March 2026

Food Business Group	Number of Premises per Group	Multiplier to account for Inspections due more than once per year	Anticipated number of Inspections due
Group1 unrated	1	none	1
Group 1A	7	none	7
Group 1 B	26	none	26
Group 1 C	6	Due every 6 months (x2)	12
Group 1D	2	Due every 3 months(x4)	8
Group 2D	18	Due every 3 months (x4)	72
Group 2E	1	Due every 1 month (x12)	12
Group 3D	0	Due every 3 months(x4)	0
Group 3E	0	Due every month (x12)	0
Totals	61		138

The Service aims to prioritise interventions in high risk establishments. This will include all new Group 1, current Group 1, Group 2E, Group 2D, Group 3D and Group 3E. In addition to this unrated Group 2 establishments (new businesses) and a proportion of Group 2C premises will also be inspected when resources allow. Details about the businesses that fall into each category are contained in Appendix 1.

However officers may be diverted to deal with issues of greater public health significance as required.

Lower risk food law interventions in Groups 2 and 3 (see Appendix 1) will be carried out when competing service demands allow. Businesses in this category are regarded as demonstrating broad compliance with food law and have therefore not been included in the programme for this year. A proportion of Group 3A establishments will be also be assessed by alternative means, when resources allow, where there is minimal inherent risk and will not be inspected unless intelligence or a justified complaint is received which suggests that the nature of the activities may have changed.

3.1.2 New Businesses

On receipt of a Food Business Registration Form a new record will be created for the business and the business will be allocated a business Group. Each month the list of unrated Group 2 businesses will be assessed, and a proportion of those will be added to the monthly inspection programme, dependant on risk, where capacity allows. Those businesses deemed higher risk will be added to the programme first irrespective of when they registered.

3.1.3 EU Exit Inspection of Fishing Vessels

In addition to the routine food law inspections and OCV visits that require to be undertaken all fishing vessels that are registered with the Authority also must be regularly inspected to allow them to continue to supply fish that is exported to the EU. As a City Authority we have fewer than 10 vessels registered, and an arrangement was made with colleagues in Aberdeenshire to undertake this work on our behalf.

3.1.4 Inspection of Approved Premises

The inspection regime for approved premises is covered by OCV Guidance.

The objective of the guidance is to provide a framework to ensure a methodical and consistent approach that meets the legislative requirements and secures a high level of public health protection and protects the reputation of Scottish food businesses.

This method differs from traditional inspections, where a suite of visits looking at different aspects of the operation comprises the inspection, rather than an individual inspection. OCV is an elevated level of intervention requiring an increase in officer hours and dedicated resources throughout the year. The OCV process provides assurance to other countries receiving exported Scottish products that there has been a high level of scrutiny and that products are compliant with all relevant food law. It also allows officers to issue Export Health Certificates (EHCs) and Support Attestations with confidence. Support Attestations provide the necessary sanitary assurances to other Authorities who are completing EHCs for product not produced in their area.

3.2 Food Complaints/Service Requests (Including complaints about hygiene of premises)

The number of food related complaints received has been relatively steady with a slight increase last year. Recently more complaints have been reported concerning businesses trading through online platforms and it can be challenging to ascertain if these businesses are based within the City. This issue had been raised both nationally and with Food Standards Scotland. Based on previous years, it is anticipated that there will be in the region of 260 complaints about food or hygiene of premises in the next 12 months.

Food complaints/service requests are evaluated on receipt by a Duty Officer. The decision-making process for action on a given complaint is informed by the

documented food complaints procedure of the Commercial Section and the Service's Food Law Enforcement Protocol. Handling food complaints is a resource intensive process and action in relation to individual complaints will be proportionate to risk. Complainants are informed of the proposed course of action and of the progress and outcome of their complaint. Procedures for dealing with service requests have been reviewed to ensure that resources are directed to those requests of significant public health concern.

3.3 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

The Service procedures fully acknowledge the Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme. In cases where a designated home authority exists, they will be contacted prior to taking formal enforcement action to assess best enforcement practice in relation to the issue at hand.

From April 2009, Food Authorities in England had the choice to become the Primary Authority for a food business operator that has establishments in more than one Local Authority area. The current Primary Authority scheme does not apply to Scotland and Scottish Authorities have been advised to treat Primary Authorities as if they were the "Home Authority". The Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 created a framework for a separate primary authority scheme in Scotland, but this has not been implemented.

Home Authorities are also informed of food complaints both as an aid to Aberdeen City's enforcement assessment and to ensure that the relevant home authorities are able to gain the fullest picture of the food safety/standards performance of their partner businesses.

The Service procedures also acknowledge the duty of Aberdeen City Council to respond to requests for an originating authority report from any food authority whose investigations have led to a point where a manufacturer or supplier within Aberdeen requires to be included in the overall investigation.

Aberdeen City Council is not formally registered as a home authority for any of the businesses producing food within its area. However, the City Council acts as originating authority for any such businesses. The current policy is to investigate all Home/Originating Authority referrals thoroughly to fully meet the requirements of the referring authority. On average this authority receives fewer than 5 such referrals per year and so this is not particularly demanding of resources. This level of service will be maintained.

3.4 Advice to Businesses

The Service provides advice to both consumers and potential business start-ups as well as guidance when significant refurbishment is being considered. There continues to be a year on year increase in the number of new businesses trading in the City. Support, information, and advice is offered to these new traders in relation to food safety controls and it is expected that this demand will continue. A small fee for this service is payable where a site visit is requested to assess an establishment prior to operation or extensive research is required before responding to queries.

Over the past few years, the number of enquiries from businesses and the public relating to food safety matters has fluctuated. The service can expect to receive approximately 45 enquiries in the forthcoming year.

However, the bulk of additional advisory work is conducted during interventions and visits.

3.5 Food Intervention and Sampling

This Service actively participates in a food sampling programme which is coordinated by Aberdeen Scientific Services. This involves taking routine surveillance samples as well as participating in both national and regional surveys. The number of samples planned this year will be in the region of 160. Capacity for sampling will be reviewed on a monthly basis and will be programmed accordingly depending on available resources.

Programmed sampling does not include formal sampling, which is required where formal enforcement action is anticipated, and is usually in response to prior intelligence – e.g., from investigation of a complaint, or failure of an informal sample taken by an enforcement officer. It is estimated that there will be less than 10 samples which fall into this category during the year

To deliver increased efficiencies, assistance with sample procurement is being provided by the Compliance Officer. This frees up enforcement officers and affords them time to concentrate on other areas of work.

The Council provides food analytical services and microbiological examination services through Aberdeen Scientific Services, which is accredited to all the necessary standards. Aberdeen Scientific Services also acts as the Council's Appointed Food Examiner and Public Analyst. This Service has a Service Level Agreement with this organisation to perform analysis of the bulk of food samples. From time to time, other appropriately accredited laboratories may conduct specific analyses.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The food regulatory service has a number of officers appropriately trained to deal with potential or actual cases or outbreaks of food poisoning and food borne disease. The Service has adopted the Health Board's Infectious Disease Incident Plan. Where issues of public health dictate, officers will be diverted from proactive intervention and sampling work and from lower priority response work.

The current Joint Health Protection Plan details the arrangements for dealing with future pandemics or other similar incidents. It is difficult to predict in advance how much resource would be required; that would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The Service has out-of-hours arrangements via a 'duty officer' stand-by system. The Service also holds a list of out of hours contact details for its food

enforcement officers, which can be used in situations where there is a serious threat to public health requiring an immediate response.

The food regulatory service currently conducts field investigations of food related infectious disease in all cases where it is judged by officers from Environmental Health or the Health Board's designated Consultant in Public Health Medicine that a particular food establishment is implicated. In addition, approximately 40 alleged cases of food poisoning are reported to the Service every year by consumers, but not all warrant detailed investigation.

The Service has previously investigated sporadic cases confirmed as suffering from food borne diseases such as salmonella and dysentery where no particular food establishments are implicated. This work has been undertaken over the last couple of years by the Health Protection Officers at Grampian Health Board but may revert to the Service in future.

3.7 Food Law Incidents

The Food Regulatory Service is advised of FAFAs, Allergy Alerts, Product Withdrawal and Product Recall Information Notices via e mail; out-of-hours contact arrangements are registered with FSS.

All service procedures for dealing with food hazards occurring within the authority are in line with the guidance contained in The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) and the associated Practice Guidance- which sets out the protocols for advising FSS and other authorities as circumstances dictate. Availability of officers in emergency situations is as described in section 3.6 above.

3.8 Liaison with Other Bodies

The principal vehicle for inter-authority liaison is the North of Scotland Food Liaison Group on which the authority is represented by the Principal EHO (Lead Food Officer) who is the chairperson. The Principal EHO (Lead Food Officer) also represents the North of Scotland on the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee (SFELC) which meets quarterly.

The authority is represented by the Principal EHO (Lead Food Officer) at the monthly meeting of the multi-disciplinary Joint Health Protection Co-ordination Group of NHS Grampian.

These liaison arrangements demand approximately 15 days of Principal EHO time per year.

Other working groups may be established throughout the year which may require officer representation. Attendance at these will be considered if appropriate and where resources allow.

It is intended that existing liaison arrangements will be continued, as they not only assist the authority in ensuring a consistent enforcement approach with

other Scottish Local Authorities but also enable efficiencies through partnership initiatives, particularly for officer training and promotional activities.

The Service also has internal liaison arrangements with the Building and Planning Control Services for prospective refurbishment of food business establishments, and with the Licensing Committee for licensed food establishments and street traders.

There is also an agreement between Local Authorities that mutual aid will be provided to deal with any emergencies. Assistance would also be provided to the Local Health Board to deal with public health associated emergencies.

3.9 Food Law Promotional Work

From time to time, where resources allow, the authority participates in promotional activities with external agencies such as neighbouring local authorities, NHS Grampian and Food Standards Scotland.

- 3.10 The Service may undertake some project work this year, resources allowing, in addition to other statutory duties. The intention is that this will be beneficial to the protection of public health and will complement the existing intervention process along with enhancing compliance with food law.

3.11 Eat Safe Project

This Service intends to continue with the Eat Safe project this year. Food Standards Scotland's Eat Safe award scheme is designed to promote excellence in food hygiene and food safety management and improve public confidence and consumer choice in catering establishments across the country.

The Eat Safe award scheme provides an incentive to caterers to strive for standards beyond those required by law, and helps consumers make informed choices about where to eat out in Scotland by providing a recognisable and well publicised sign of excellence in standards of food hygiene. Those establishments who meet the standards are entitled to display the Eat Safe logo which is a readily recognisable symbol of high food hygiene standards across Scotland.

Eligible establishments are assessed for the Eat Safe award as part of scheduled food hygiene interventions. In Scotland there have been over 1000 Eat Safe awards issued. Aberdeen City currently has 6 Eat Safe award holders.

This Service reviews Eat Safe award status at every planned food hygiene intervention.

3.12 Elementary Food Hygiene Training

Good food hygiene is essential for protecting public health and ensuring the safety of food. In Scotland, food poisoning and foodborne illnesses remain a

significant concern, making it crucial for businesses and individuals involved in food handling to adhere to strict hygiene practices. Food hygiene training equips individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent contamination and helps to ensure that food is safe.

The Service has established a training centre to deliver Royal Environmental Health Institute Scotland(REHIS) Elementary Food Hygiene Training with face-to-face courses occurring monthly. Resources will have to be diverted from other areas to allow delivery of the training programme.

3.13 Food Hygiene Information Scheme

The Food Hygiene Information Scheme was launched in Scotland in 2006. It provides consumers with an insight into the hygiene standards found at food hygiene inspections. The scheme was developed to increase consumer confidence and help people make informed choices about where they eat or buy their food.

The results can be viewed on the FSS website. The scheme applies to all food outlets that supply food directly to consumers. Each business is asked to display a certificate/sticker on the door or window of their establishment, confirming that they have passed their most recent food hygiene inspection. The inspection outcome applies to businesses trading at a particular address, so that a change of business operator at a given address will require a fresh assessment. The outcomes of the assessments are divided into four categories as detailed below:

Pass

A 'Pass' indicates that the business broadly met the legal requirements. These requirements include the hygiene conditions found during the inspection and the management procedures in place for providing safe food.

Improvement Required

Where a business has failed to meet these requirements, it will not be issued with a "Pass" certificate. This outcome will appear as an "Improvement Required" on the website.

Exempt Establishments

A very small number of establishments may be registered as food businesses in circumstances where it is unlikely that customers will view them as food premises. The assessment for such establishments will have concluded that the food safety risk is negligible.

In such cases (and only with the agreement of the business), a certificate will not be issued and the information on the local authority website will indicate that the business is currently exempt from the food hygiene information scheme.

Awaiting Inspection

Where a business has not yet been inspected, it will be issued with a temporary certificate advising consumers of that fact. This will appear as 'Awaiting

Inspection' on the website. Establishments will also require to be re-inspected where they have changed ownership.

FSS is currently reviewing the Scheme.

3.14 **Food Fraud/Crime**

Food fraud is committed when food is deliberately placed on the market, for financial gain, with the intention of deceiving the consumer. Following the pandemic, EU Exit and fuel price rises there may be an upsurge in food crime; officers will be vigilant during visits and will address any issues identified. Although there are many kinds of food fraud the two main types are:

i) the sale of food which is unfit and potentially harmful, such as:

- recycling of animal by-products back into the food chain
- packing and selling of beef and poultry with an unknown origin
- knowingly selling goods which are past their 'use by' date

ii) the deliberate mis-description of food, such as:

- products substituted with a cheaper alternative, for example, farmed salmon sold as wild, and Basmati rice adulterated with cheaper varieties
- making false statements about the source of ingredients, i.e., their geographic, plant or animal origin

Food fraud may also involve the sale of meat from animals that have been stolen and/or illegally slaughtered, as well as wild game animals like deer that may have been poached.

Resources will be invested in tackling food fraud in the City, including training for officers. The Service will work in partnership with colleagues in other agencies including Food Standards Scotland, Police Scotland, HMRC, the Home Office Immigration Intelligence Unit and other local authorities

4. Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

The financial allocation for the food regulatory service is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Financial allocation for the food service¹ 2025/2026

Expenditure		Food Total £
	Staffing	£455,000
	Training	Centralised funding
	Sampling	£300,000
	Service Expenditure	£61,600
	Total Expenditure	£816,000
Income		
	Total Income	£88,000
Net Cost		£728,000

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The current allocation of full-time equivalent officers to the Food Regulatory Service is detailed in Table 5 below. A national project, SAFER, has been underway for a couple of years now, to help Local Authorities determine the resources required to provide food law related activities in future.

Food Standards Scotland have provided information which assists local authorities with annual resource calculations. These values are recorded in their Scottish National Database.

¹ Estimate based on number of full-time equivalent employees working in support of the food enforcement service

Table 5: Allocation of full-time equivalent staff to the Food Service

Full Time Equivalent Officers	Establishment	In Post
Section Management		
Protective Services Manager	0.13	0.13
Environmental Health Manager	0.4	0.4
Principal Environmental Health Officers	1.2	1.2
Environmental Health Officers	4.8	3.0
Authorised Officers	1.65	1.65
Trainee Authorised Officer	1.8	1.8
Compliance Officer	0.8	0.8
Admin Support	0.1	0.1
Total	10.88	9.08

4.3 Officer Development Plan

The Service ensures that:

- a) All officers involved in food safety interventions are qualified Environmental Health Officers or hold the SFSORB Higher Certificates in Food Establishment Inspection and Food Standards Inspection or Food Practice.
- b) All officers involved in the seizure or assessment of foods are Environmental Health Officers, Authorised Officers holding the Higher Certificate in Food Practice or Authorised Officers with specialist qualifications in food inspection.
- c) All officers involved in the assessment of Approved Premises have had suitable specialist training.

The Service is committed to taking advantage of all opportunities to enhance the skills and competence of officers.

It is also intended to send a proportion of officers on the REHIS sponsored Food Update Course each year subject to budget availability, course content and the availability of places.

Technical update meetings will continue to be held every month to disseminate information on policy, new legislation and new developments in food enforcement and the food industry in a structured way. These meetings promote consistency of enforcement approach between enforcement officers.

5. Quality Assessment

The Service has established a Quality Monitoring System for intervention activity, which is designed to ensure:

- a) Properly planned and resourced risk-based food hygiene interventions are undertaken;
- b) Officers with the appropriate levels of experience and training are selected to carry out interventions;
- b) The consistent application of the Councils' Food Law Enforcement Protocol;
- c) That the intervention itself is viewed as more than a specific visit;
- d) Appropriate training, guidance and coaching is provided to enforcement officers in the furtherance of the objective of continuous professional development;
- e) Consistency of enforcement approach between enforcement officers.

6. Review

6.1 Review Against the Service Plan

The Service Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. The review of the 24-25 Plan can be found in Appendix 2.

6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan

Review of the plan will include assessment of performance against the plan, identify areas for improvement and forecast the demands on the service and the appropriate service mix required to meet those demands. The Service Plan will be revised as appropriate.

6.3 Areas for Improvement

- a) Review and update of policy and procedures as required.
- b) Continue to establish partnership agreements for promotional and educational initiatives where possible.
- c) Continued involvement in the food sampling programme where resources allow.
- d) Continued application and support of Food Hygiene Information Scheme.
- e) Continued involvement in the Eat Safe Project.
- f) Promote careers as Environmental Health Officers/Food Safety Officers at educational establishments where resources allow whilst reinforcing the message and importance of food safety.
- g) Dedicate resources to food fraud investigation
- h) Dedicate resources to providing Elementary Food Hygiene Training

Appendix 1

5. Food Law Rating System

5.1 The Ladder

Group 1 Business	Performance Levels	Band	Intervention Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturer of High Risk Foods. Manufacturer, Caterer, Processor or Retailer that undertakes a specific method of processing that has the potential to increase the risk to public health beyond that of normal preparation, storage or cooking. Manufacturers of Foods for Specific Groups. All Exporters. Manufacturers, Processors, Importers, Wholesaler, Distributor, Food Broker, Packers of Food at enhanced risk of food fraud, substitution, adulteration or contamination. 	Sustained Compliance	1A	18 Months
	Compliant and confident in compliance going forward	1B	12 Months
	Minor Non-compliance and/or gaps in confidence in compliance going forward	1C	6 Months
	Significant Non-Compliance and/or no confidence in compliance going forward	1D	3 Months
	Sustained non-compliance and/or Issues of Public Health Significance or Fraudulent Activity	1E	Intensive Intervention. 1 Month.
Group 2 Business	Performance Levels	Band	Intervention Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other Manufacturers, Processors, and Caterers. Importers, packers, wholesalers and distributors of high-risk foods not in Group 1. Head Office Business that undertakes a regional/national decision making function. Retailers handling open high-risk foods. 	Sustained Compliance	2A	24 Months
	Compliant and confident in compliance going forward	2B	18 Months
	Minor Non-compliance and/or gaps in confidence in compliance going forward	2C	12 Months
	Significant Non-Compliance and/or no confidence in compliance going forward	2D	3 Months
	Sustained non-compliance and/or Issues of Public Health Significance or Fraudulent Activity	2E	Intensive Intervention. 1 Month.
Group 3 Business	Performance Levels	Band	Intervention Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other retailers, Food Brokers, Importers, packers, wholesalers and distributors. Public Houses and similar Licenced Business not providing catering. Business providing limited refreshments (e.g. tea, coffee, soft drinks) as an adjunct to main activity. Child minders. Supported Living Business. Business producing low risk food based from a domestic dwelling. Bed & Breakfasts. 	Sustained Compliance or Businesses where information available at point of registration, indicates there is minimal inherent risk	3A	No proactive Intervention or 60 months.
	Compliant and confident in compliance going forward	3B	36 Months
	Minor Non-Compliance and/or gaps in confidence in compliance going forward	3C	24 Months
	Significant Non-Compliance and/or no confidence in compliance going forward	3D	3 Months.
	Sustained Non-Compliance and/or Issues of Public Health Significance or Fraudulent Activity	3E	Intensive Intervention. 1 month.

Appendix 2

Food Regulatory Service Plan Review

2024/2025

1. Food Law Interventions

The number of food law interventions achieved in high-risk premises between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 within the target time were as follows:

	2024/25	
Risk Category	Inspections Due	Inspections Achieved
Group 1A	2	2
Group 1B	8	8
Group 1C	11	11
Group 1D	2	2
Group 1E	0	0
Group 2D	63	63
Group 2E	8	8
Total	94	94

The figures indicate that the performance achievement in respect of high-risk premises was 100%.

In addition to the premises included in the table above, 330 interventions were also performed in the year. These consisted of a combination of new unrated premises, lower risk establishments and premises that had been brought to the attention of the Service following complaints or had resulted from sample failures requiring follow up at the premises.

2. Official Controls Verification

26 Approved premises were visited in the 2024-2025 year. An intervention at these premises consists of a series of visits and interactions rather than an individual inspection.

3. Formal Enforcement Action

13 Hygiene Improvement Notices were served under Regulation 6 of the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 in respect of 5 food premises.

The number of notices fluctuates year on year depending on the inspections that are due during that period.

A breakdown of the non-compliances contained within the Notices is as follows:

Facilities and equipment	3
Food Safety Management System	6
Structural repair & Cleanliness	4
Personal Protective Equipment	0
Training	0
Pest control	0

It is proposed to continue the practice of serving formal action Notices on food business operators at the first revisit stage following the notification of a contravention of the Regulations including an appropriate time scale for improvement.

In addition 3 Remedial Action Notices were served and 7 Voluntary Closures were secured during the year.

4. Food Complaints

A total of 259 food complaints in respect of food and food premises were received in 2024/2025. These were dealt with according to the Services' food complaints procedure and Enforcement Protocol. It should be noted that on average complaints form only a proportion of the total number of requests for service. In addition to the figures detailed below there were 46 requests for advice which includes those relating to information sought when setting up a new food business. There were also 47 requests from businesses asking for their Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS) rating to be reviewed

A breakdown of food service requests received is as follows:

Alleged food poisoning	42
Food Complaint	71
Food Information/ Labelling Complaint	14
Hygiene of Food Premises	119
Allergens Complaint	5
Waste Complaint	8
Total	259

5. Food Sampling

There is no statutory target in respect of obtaining and submitting food samples.

Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory operates a unit charging scheme and a fixed number of units is allocated, on an annual basis, in respect of food microbiological examination and food chemistry analysis.

Samples are taken for general monitoring and both national and local surveillance surveys. In addition re-active samples, as a result of consumer

complaints or as part of investigations of food poisoning outbreaks, may also be taken from time to time.

The actual samples submitted for laboratory analysis or examination during 2024/2025 totalled 108 chemical with 29 sample failures to date and 53 microbiological samples with 4 failures.

Of the chemical samples, 16 were taken as part of a Food Standards Scotland Survey, 2 of those analysed to date have failed. 82 samples were taken for general monitoring purposes and 16 samples to date have failed. 2 samples were related to food complaints.

Of the microbiological samples taken, 22 were taken as part of a Food Standards Scotland Survey and 1 of those analysed failed

Sample failures were followed up and the results provided to the food businesses or product manufacturer.

6. Notification, Control and Investigation of Outbreaks of Foodborne Disease

Notifications received from NHS Grampian in respect of confirmed foodborne disease totalled 7.

A breakdown of specific diseases is as follows:

Salmonella	3
E.Coli	1
Hepatitis E	0
Dysentery	0
Campylobacter	0
Listeria	1
Giardia	2
Total	7

In addition, 10 suspected cases of food borne disease originating in schools, nurseries and nursing homes were also reported to the Service via the Health Board.

All were investigated without the necessity of any formal action.

No major foodborne disease outbreaks occurred during the year.

7. Food Hazard Warnings

The food alerts received from the Food Standards Agency during 2024/2025 are detailed below.

Category of Alert	2024/2025
Food Alert For Action	3
Product Recall Information Notice	49
Product Withdrawal Information Notice	0
Allergy Alert	60
TOTAL	112

Officers are made aware of the withdrawal, recall and allergy alerts and accordingly check for products on sale when they are carrying out routine inspections and premises visits. In the case of the Alerts for Action the premises known to stock the items in question are specifically targeted at the time the Alert is issued to ensure that there is no product on site.

8. Export Health Certificates

The Service issued 68 Export Health Certificates for fishery products during 2024/2025. This is a significant reduction from pre-EU Exit levels.

9. Ship Sanitation Exemption Certificates

The Service issued 203 Ship Sanitation Exemption Certificates and 36 Ship Sanitation Exemption Extension Certificates in the year.

Performance on Areas for Improvement 2024/2025

Areas for Improvement	Action
Review and update of Policy and Procedures as required	Target met
Implementation of hybrid working for food inspections including where possible digital generation and sharing of inspection outcomes	Target met. Officers working between home and office base. Majority of letters and inspection paperwork issued via e mail.
Establish partnership agreements for promotional and educational activities where possible	No opportunities arose within the year
Continued involvement in the food sampling programme	Target met
Continued application and support of Food Hygiene Information Scheme	Ongoing
Continued involvement in the EatSafe Project	Ongoing

Promote careers as Environmental Health Officers/Food Safety Officers at school careers fairs whilst reinforcing the message and importance of food safety	Officers attended a careers event at a St Machar Academy in March 2025
Dedicate resources to food fraud investigation	Ongoing

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection
DATE	27th May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Protective Services Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service Plan 2025/26
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/058
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Vikki Cuthbert/Alan Thomson
REPORT AUTHOR	Alison Robertson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline the Protective Services' proposals for delivering the Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service for year 2025/2026.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee approves the Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service Plan for 2025/26 (Appendix 1).

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 As an Enforcing Authority, the Council has responsibility for the provision of health and safety enforcement services covering a range of businesses, mainly within the service sector, covering approximately 4,500 establishments.
- 3.2 The principal activities regarding these establishments are:
- a) Investigating complaints relating to safety, occupational health and welfare at these workplaces;
 - b) Investigating reported accidents arising in the course of work activities;
 - c) Investigating reports of statutory examination of certain types of work equipment, where the examination has revealed defects;
 - d) Receiving notifications of work involving asbestos that may require to be followed up to ensure adequate controls are in place; and
 - e) Engaging in focussed intervention programmes.
- 3.3 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) identifies its national priorities for local authority action in their annual Local Authority Circular (LAC 67/2 – 2025/2026 – Work Year) document.

The production of this Report is the earliest opportunity to incorporate its targeted priorities within a Service Plan for 2025/26, along with interventions addressing local concerns.

- 3.4 It is a statutory requirement that the Council make adequate arrangements for enforcement of the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the production of a Service Plan and the ability to meet its targets in practice is considered to fulfil this stipulation.

There continues to be a national shortage of qualified officers authorised to carry out health and safety enforcement. There are currently 4.0 FTE Environmental Health Officers(EHO) in post who spend approximately 15% of time involved in health and safety enforcement activities. The full establishment number of EHO posts for the service is 6.4 FTE.

The 2025-26 Service Plan sets out prioritising statutory duties related to investigation and enforcement of activities detailed in 3.2.

Officers carry out a range of activities including food safety, licensing, animal health, and welfare, port health inspections. Focused interventions have been prioritised having regard to minimising impact on existing service requirements and as to what can be successfully achieved within these constraints.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Local authorities have a duty under section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to make adequate arrangements for the enforcement within their area of the relevant statutory provisions. The Occupational Health and Safety Service Plan 2025/26 assists the Council to perform their enforcement functions and to comply with this duty.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Management Of Risk Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Taking into account controls/ control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Unable to deliver service due to acute disruptive events.	Business continuity plans in place to continue key service provision.	L	Yes
Compliance	Failure to meet statutory duty to provide an adequate health and safety enforcement service could lead to intervention by HSE and the transfer of some enforcement functions from the Council to HSE	Provision of – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate staff resources to meet demand, appropriate training needs identified through CR+D, 1-2-1 discussions effective management of staff workloads, achievable targets within the Service Plan. 	L	Yes
Operational	Inability to meet targets in Service Plan through other work being given priority. Insufficient number of appropriately trained staff.	Provision of – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate staff resources to meet demand, appropriate training needs identified through CR+D ,121discussions, effective management of staff workloads, achievable targets within 	M	Yes

Management Of Risk Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
		the Service Plan.		
Financial	No significant risks identified.	n/a		
Reputational	Local and National press coverage of any failure to effectively perform the statutory duties can present reputational damage to the organisation	Provision of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate staff resources to meet demand, effective management of staff workloads, achievable targets within the Service Plan Effective communication with media on work activities that may be of Local /National significance. 	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified.	n/a		

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.'
Working in Partnership for Aberdeen	A Prosperous City, delivering an interventions programme that assists stimulate sustainable economic development in workplaces.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals in this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 11 "Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026" Ensuring that acceptable standards of health, safety and welfare are being met in Aberdeen will contribute towards this outcome.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the Regional Economic Strategy by assisting local businesses to thrive and prosper by providing advice to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	Not required.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [HELA LAC 67/2 – 2025-2026 Work Year - Setting Local Authority Priorities and Targeting Interventions](#)

10.2 [National Local Authority Enforcement Code- Health and Safety at Work](#)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – Protective Services Occupational Health and Safety Service Plan 2025/26.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Protective Services

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Service Plan

2025-26

Introduction

The Occupational Health & Safety Service Plan will reflect the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE's) national priorities and also address local matters of concern as appropriate.

The Plan is reviewed on an annual basis by the Principal Environmental Health Officer (PEHO) specialising in Occupational Health and Safety in conjunction with the Environmental Health Manager and Protective Services Manager.

The Service Plan details the intended activity of the Service based on service resources available.

Occupational Health and Safety Service Plan

1. Service Aims and Objectives

- 1.1 The overall aim of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service is to work with others to protect people's health and safety by ensuring physical risks in the workplace are managed properly.
- 1.2 The Service seeks to ensure the health and safety of members of the public is not compromised by ensuring businesses comply with their obligation to provide safe systems of work.
- 1.3 These aims are addressed primarily through the enforcement of relevant legislation by a variety of means, but also through advice given during visits to businesses. Opportunities are also taken to provide advice and promotion of relevant issues to employers, employees and, where appropriate, the wider public.

2. Scope of and Demands on the Health and Safety Regulatory Service

- 2.1 As an Enforcing Authority, the Council has responsibility for the provision of health and safety enforcement services covering a range of businesses, mainly within the service sector, covering approximately 4,500 establishments

The principal activities in regard to these premises include: -

- a) Investigating complaints relating to health, safety and welfare at these workplaces,
- b) Investigating reported accidents arising in the course of work activities,
- c) Investigating reports of statutory examination of certain types of work equipment, where the examination has revealed defects,
- d) Receiving notifications of work involving asbestos that may require to be followed up to ensure adequate controls are in place; and
- e) Engaging in focussed intervention programmes when appropriate.

2.2 The term 'enforcement' is not restricted to the use of legal sanctions to achieve the aims of the legislation. 'Enforcement' is also taken to include: -

- a) Encouragement of businesses to achieve compliance and adopt good practice through awareness raising promotion, education, and provision of feedback,
- a) Raising the awareness of employers, self-employed and employees about health and safety issues and the measures necessary or available to control them,
- b) Partnership management with the business and voluntary sectors and other agencies,
- d) The provision of advice about best practice,
- e) The provision of advice about the application and interpretation of legislation.

2.3 Formal enforcement options include:

- a) The use of enforcement notice procedures to require improvements to health and safety controls or prohibit dangerous work activities,
- b) The power to seize or render safe dangerous equipment, substances or articles
- c) Reporting matters to the Procurator Fiscal with a view to instigating prosecution.

2.4 The officers conducting health and safety inspections also have responsibilities for inspecting establishments under food safety legislation as detailed in Section 3.

2.5 The business profile for which the service is responsible for health and safety enforcement is detailed in Table 1 below (latest available data 2025)

Table 1: Business Profile for Health and Safety Enforcement in Aberdeen

Type of Establishments	No. in category (as of 16/04/2025)
Retail	1057
Wholesale	143
Office	1096
Catering	1372
Hotels	82
Residential Care	92
Leisure	185
Consumer Services	465
Other	166
Total	4658

3. Organisational Structure

3.1 The Occupational Health and Safety Regulatory Service

The Service is a city-wide service provided from the Commercial Team of Protective Services by a mix of Environmental Health Officers, Authorised Officers and Licensing Standards Officers. The Service also carries out a range of additional activities including food safety, licensing, animal health and welfare inspections which gives the opportunity to deal with any health and safety concerns identified at the time of the visit.

3.2 Staffing Allocation (as of 16/04/2025)

Section Management	Full Time Equivalent Staff involved in health & safety enforcement
Protective Services Manager	0.1
Environmental Health Manager	0.2
Principal EHO	0.6
Field Staff	
EHO	0.4
Total	1.3

3.3 The Service will only deploy officers to carry out enforcement tasks for which they possess the appropriate qualifications and experience. Officers who are not accredited operate under the close supervision of the Principal EHO. Formal enforcement action [service of notices or preparation of reports to the Procurator Fiscal] is subject to the scrutiny of the Principal EHO or Environmental Health Manager.

3.4 There continues to be a national shortage of qualified officers authorised to carry out health and safety enforcement. There are currently 4.0 FTE Environmental Health Officers(EHO) in post who spend approximately 15% of their time involved in health and safety enforcement activities which are mainly reactive. Compliance with some Health and Safety legislation is also assessed during food law inspections. The full establishment number of EHO posts for the service is 6.4 FTE

4. Service Delivery

4.1 Local authorities have a duty to make adequate arrangements for enforcement under section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. “The National Local Authority Enforcement Code – Health and Safety at Work” sets out what is meant by “adequate arrangements for enforcement” and concentrates on the following four objectives:

- a) Clarifying the **roles and responsibilities** of business, regulators and

professional bodies to ensure a shared understanding of management of risk,

- b) Outlining the ***risk-based regulatory approach*** that Local Authorities should adopt with reference to the Regulator's Compliance Code, Health and Safety Executive's (HSE') Enforcement Policy Statement and the need to target relevant and effective interventions that focus on influencing behaviours and improving the management of risk,
- c) Setting out the need for the training and competence of LA H&S regulators linked to the authorisation and use of HSWA powers; and,
- d) Explaining the arrangements for collection and publication of LA data and peer review to give an assurance on meeting the requirements of this Code.

4.2 "The National Local Authority Enforcement Code – Health and Safety at Work" sets out what is meant by "adequate arrangements for enforcement."

Practically, this Service is guided to achieve this by:

- a) having a risk-based Service Plan focussed on tackling specific risks,
- b) evaluate the risks that they need to address and use the whole range of interventions to target these specific risks,
- c) reserving unannounced proactive inspection only for the activities and sectors published by HSE or where intelligence suggests risks are not being effectively managed. A program of inspections out with this scope is not considered to be acceptable practice in terms of the above Code,
- d) using national and local intelligence to inform priorities,
- e) ensuring that officers authorised to enforce the requirements are trained and competent,
- f) setting clear expectations for delivery,
- g) having a clear and easily accessible enforcement policy,
- h) providing easily accessible information on services and advice available to businesses,
- i) publishing data on our health and safety inspection records,
- j) having an easily accessible complaints procedure.

4.3 Arising from the Enforcement Code is a list, produced by the HSE, of high-risk activities/sectors that may be subject to proactive inspections, and which guides the Service's direction in enforcement activity.

4.4 In summary, this means local authorities ensure their planned regulatory activity is focussed on outcomes-primarily working to deliver those national priorities set by HSE, taking account of local issues prioritised by risk, and be accompanied by a programme meeting the requirements of the Code.
These national priorities are defined in HSE's "HELA LAC 67/2 – 2025-2026 Work Year - Setting Local Authority Priorities and Targeting Interventions" which is updated annually.

- 4.5 There is currently a national shortage of qualified officers resulting in a significant reduction in service FTE available. Health and safety delivery is therefore prioritised on a risk basis. Reactive work will largely be confined to responding to accident investigations and investigating complaints on a prioritised basis, providing advice informally and following up on significant issues that maybe discovered during other visits.
- 4.6 Proactive work will be confined to those activities that will have a significant local impact and that are proportionate to the limited resources available. The following are considered achievable based on the current resources available.

Activity	Why	How	Resource Demand
Health and Safety management and control in Swimming Pools	Potential consequences of non-compliance at leisure venues are severe. No recent focus in any detail.	A definitive list of venues will be produced. Visits will largely be programmed when applications are made for Public Entertainment Licences required by leisure venues	Medium
Gas safety in commercial catering premises	Local priority arising from intelligence that duty holders are not fully aware of their responsibilities. This is supported by the experience of Officers of this Service.	During food safety inspections and enforcement action taken when necessary. Proactive intervention visits proposed for fourth quarter of 2025/early 2026	Medium.
Violence at work (premises with vulnerable working conditions such as night working/cash handling e.g. betting shops/off-licences/hospitality)	Risk of serious injury if appropriate measures are not in place.	Primarily through programmed visits by Licensing Standards Officers (LSOs) for licensing compliance purposes. Also, when particular premises are considered to be high risk (crime levels in area, police concern)	Low as will largely be included within other LSO work activities.

Trampoline parks – Improved information provision and supervision of others	Highlight with the duty holders the importance of ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient standard operating procedures in place to ensure the safety of users, spectators and others	Proactive intervention visit to Trampoline park proposed for early 2026	Low – 1 trampoline park in Aberdeen
Raising awareness of the work-related stress and mental health campaign 'Working Minds' with businesses	Recognition that the numbers of workers suffering from stress is high.	Intelligence gathering by Officers during visits through completion of a questionnaire.	Low, if restricted to non-food business visits, as otherwise would be considered to be unacceptably burdensome.
Cooling towers located in built-up areas	Outbreak of Legionnaire's disease in other UK area arising from cooling tower	Visit and inspect only known site in area, although not within "built up area".	Low (1 officer, 1 working day)
Planned Preventative Maintenance	Failure to maintain work equipment can result in dangerous situations in the workplace. Perception that employers are not taking the necessary steps to ensure safe working.	Raised awareness by Officers to identify situations during visits.	Low as will be included within other work activities.

5. Quality Monitoring and Assessment

- 5.1 Documented procedures for quality monitoring and quality assessment of the Service have been established where competency is assessed, with consistency checks being conducted throughout the year. These should ensure adherence to the Service's Health and Safety Enforcement Policy, HSE guidance and the Enforcement Management Model.

6. Performance Review 2024/25

Year 2024/25 is reviewed below.

Intervention type		Number of Inspection / intervention visits		Notes
Proactive Inspections	Proactive inspection	Targeted using National Intelligence	Targeted using Local Intelligence	
		0	1	Tanning salon intervention visit following complaint
Non- inspection interventions	Other visits/face to face contacts	0	0	Resources proposed for proactive intervention visits diverted to health & safety investigations
	Other contact /interventions	0	0	Resources proposed for proactive intervention visits diverted to health & safety investigations
Reactive visits	Visit to investigate incidents	13		
	Visit to investigate complaints	25		
	Visits following requests for advice	0		
Revisits following earlier interventions		0		
Improvement Notices		0		
Immediate Prohibition Notices		0		
Deferred Prohibition Notices		0		

7. Areas for Continuous Improvement

- a) Ensure that the profile of occupational health and safety is maintained and
- b) enhanced primarily by the activities detailed in this Plan,
- c) Undertake promotional and educational initiatives whenever possible,
- d) All field officers to be assessed as to their competency. Development needs to be identified
- e) Ensure the publication of appropriate data of the Service's Occupational Health and Safety activities.

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COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Performance Report
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/095
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie
REPORT AUTHOR	Louise Fox
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Committee with the status of appropriate key performance measures relating to services falling within its remit.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report Appendix.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Report Purpose

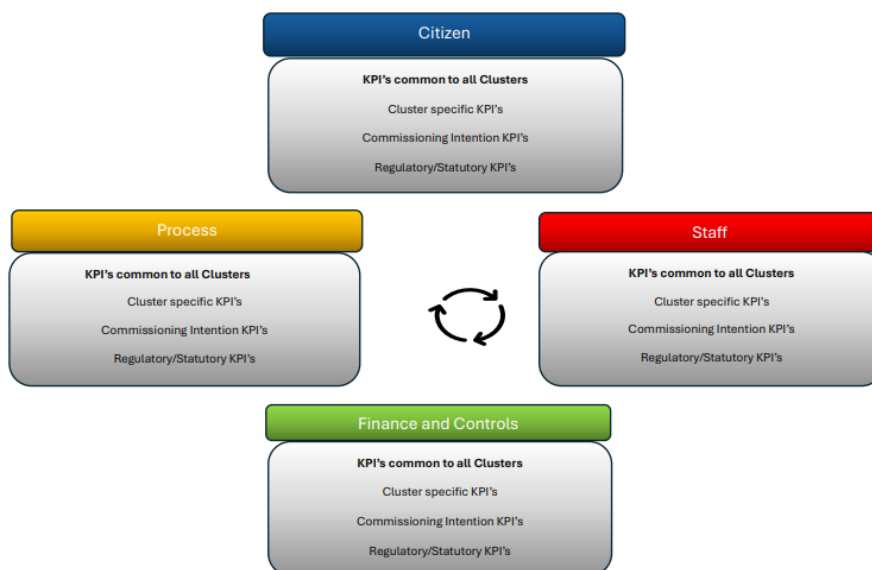
- 3.1 This report is to provide members with appropriate key performance measures in relation to certain relevant services as expressed within the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan, agreed at the March 2024 Council meeting.

Report Structure and Content

- 3.2 Performance Management Framework Reporting against in-house delivery directly contributing to, or enabling delivery against, the city's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) has informed development of successive Council Delivery Plans, including the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan, agreed on 6th March 2024.
- 3.3 The Council's Performance Management Framework, supporting and enabling scrutiny against progress of the Council Delivery Plan and its key measures, establishes a robust performance management and reporting system which encompasses single and multi-service inputs, outputs and outcomes.
- 3.4 The refreshed Performance Management Framework for 2024/25 was approved at the meeting of Council on 21 August 2024.
- 3.5 Service standards against each function/cluster, associated with Council delivery planning, offer continuous insight into the effectiveness, and

accessibility of core service provision to the Council's stakeholders and city communities.

- 3.6 Where appropriate, data capture against these standards is now directly incorporated within the suite of metrics contained within Appendix A and will be reported against on either a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.
- 3.7 The Performance Management Framework provides for a consistent approach within which performance will be reported to Committees. This presents performance data and analysis within four core perspectives, as shown below, which provides for uniformity of performance reporting across Committees.



- 3.8 This report, as far as possible, details performance up to the end of March 2025 or Quarter 4 2024/25, as appropriate.
- 3.9 Appendix A provides an overview of performance across certain appropriate services, with reference to recent trends and performance against target. Further analysis is also provided of several performance measures which have been identified as of potential interest in terms of either performance implications or data trends.
- 3.10 Within the summary dashboard the following symbols are also used:

Performance Measures

Traffic Light Icon



On target or within 5% of target



Within 5% - 20% of target and being monitored



More than 20% below target and being actively pursued



Data only – target not appropriate

Where narrative analysis of progress against service standards is provided and has been attributed with a RAG status by the relevant Service Manager, these are defined as follows:

RAG Status

GREEN

– Actions are on track with no delays/issues emerging

AMBER

– Actions are experiencing minor delays/issues emerging and are being closely monitored

RED

- Actions are experiencing significant delays/issues with improvement measures being put in place

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	None	NA	NA	NA
Compliance	No significant legal risks.	Publication of service performance information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in	L	Yes

		the context of Best value reporting.		
Operational	No significant operational risks.	Oversight by Elected Members of core employee health and safety/attendance data supports the Council's obligations as an employer	L	Yes
Financial	No significant financial risks.	Overview data on specific limited aspects of the clusters' financial performance is provided within this report	L	Yes
Reputational	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting of service performance to Members and in the public domain serves to enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	NA	NA	NA

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	None
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The Council aims to support improvement in the local economy to ensure a high quality of life for all people in Aberdeen. This report monitors indicators which reflect current economic activity within the City and actions taken by the Council to support such activity.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Council is committed to improving the key life outcomes of all people in Aberdeen. This report monitors key indicators impacting on the lives of all citizens of Aberdeen. Thus, Committee will be enabled to assess the effectiveness of measures already implemented, as well as allowing an evaluation of future actions which may be required to ensure an improvement in such outcomes.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The Council is committed to ensuring that Aberdeen is a welcoming place to invest, live and visit,

	operating to the highest environmental standards. This report provides essential information in relation to environmental issues allowing the Committee to measure the impact of any current action.
Regional and City Strategies	None

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No Assessment is required for this report. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Martin Murchie, Chief Officer, Data Insights (HDRCA) on 23 rd April 2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council Delivery Plan 2024/25 – COM/24/060
[Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026](#) (April 2024 Refresh)
 Performance Management Framework – COM/23/168

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Performance Summary Dashboard

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee Performance Report Appendix A

Corporate Landlord

Building Services





1. Citizen – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
The year to date percentage of repairs appointments kept	There are on-going challenges in extracting this data from the current system. A new system has been procured to enable easier extraction of data, the new system will start to be rolled out from March 2025.						90%	
Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (year to date).							80%	









Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	93		72		51			
% of complaints resolved within timescale stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	82.8%		73.6%		74.5%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	15.1%		20.8%		29.4%			
*Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	0		1		8			













*Lessons learnt referred to throughout this Appendix are lasting actions taken/changes made to resolve an issue and to prevent future re-occurrence for example amending an existing procedure or revising training processes. When a complaint has been upheld, action would be taken in the form of an apology or staff discussion/advice, but these actions are not classified as lessons learnt.

2. Processes – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
The year to date average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hrs)	There are on-going challenges in extracting this data from the current system. A new system has been procured to enable easier extraction of data, the new system will start to be rolled out from March 2025.						4.1	
The year to date average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)							8.3	
The year to date percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time							90%	
The percentage of Repairs Inspections completed within 20 working day target (year to date)							100%	

3. Staff – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Building Services)	1		2		1			
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Building Services)	3		4		4			

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost - Building Services	4.4		4.3		4.3		4.8	
**Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	1.25		1.09		1.11			
Establishment actual FTE	410.76		411.38		414.93			

*Absence data throughout this report reflects robust calculations of FTE based absence but with recognition that minimal variances in accuracy can arise in longitudinal and service comparisons where part time/variable hours working contracts are more common. The impact of this technical/statistical issue has been assessed as producing a marginal inflationary effect on absence levels within Services where a greater proportion of these types of contract are appropriate to effective service delivery.

** This indicator calculates the working days lost due to sickness per month per employee. This is calculated by dividing the total number of days lost due to sickness during the respective month by the average of all the FTE staff employed during the same month.

4. Finance & Controls – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	86.9%		96.4%		105.6%		100%	

Facilities Management

1. Customer – Facilities Management













Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	4		1		2			
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	75%		100%		100%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	0%		100%		0%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	0		0		0			

















Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Q4 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Number of school lunches served in the year - Primary (YTD)	927,735		1,463,952		2,073,086		2,000,000	

*The expansion of free school meal provision and increasing pupil rolls at schools across the city have combined to see more school meals being served in our Primary schools. The service will continue to monitor pupil rolls and meal uptakes as we work through the year and will revise targets appropriately.

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
All meals served to children and young people in our schools will meet The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020		100%
The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020 came into effect from April 2021. Our School Catering service aims for 100% compliance with the regulations to ensure that whilst in school, our children and young people are receiving the nutrition they require to be effective learners. We have set this as a service standard particular to Aberdeen City Council's school Catering Service and there is no comparative benchmarking information which we can use to compare performance with other local authorities. Performance is not reported as a metric, but the intention of the measure is to highlight to Committee any reports received on nutritional non-compliance from Education Scotland's school inspection visits.		

2. Processes – Facilities Management

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Fly tipping alerts at housing multi-storey blocks responded to within 60 hours	90.9%		94.1%		94.4%		100%	
% Response cleaning alerts responded to within priority timescales	100%		93.8%		100%		100%	
% Void cleaning alerts responded to within priority timescales	87%		79.2%		97.5%		100%	

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*% Local bus service registration changes reviewed and responded to within the prescribed 28-day period	83.3%		100%		100%		100%	
% Mainstream Transport Applications assessed within target timescale	100%		100%		100%		100%	
% ASN/Exceptional Applications processed within target timescale	100%		100%		100%		100%	
% School Transport Contracts Spot Checked within time period	29.3%		59.3%		59.3%		50% (Q4)	

*There were 6 registration changes during Q2 of which 5 were processed on time. The failure to progress 1 set of registrations in the designated timescale was due to the established procedure not being followed and this has now been addressed. An improved tracking sheet has also been implemented for bus service registrations to aid compliance with the procedure.









Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will deliver 39 weeks contracted school cleaning to the standards set in our generic specification.		100%
Cleaning service is delivered by the in-house team at all non-3Rs schools in the city, for the 190 days of the school session plus the 5 annual in-service days. We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a school has been unable to open due to our inability to provide a satisfactory cleaning service.		

































Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will deliver cleaning services within all (non-school) operational properties to the standards set in our generic specification.		100%
Cleaning service is delivered by the in-house team throughout the year at all other operational properties across the city, on all weekdays minus public holidays (a limited number of properties also receive service over weekends). We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a property has been unable to open due to our inability to provide a satisfactory cleaning service.		

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will provide janitorial support to every (non 3Rs) primary school for a minimum of 4 hours per day when the school is open to pupils.		100%
Janitorial service is delivered by the in-house team at all non-3Rs Primary schools in the city, throughout the year. For the 190 days of the school session plus the 5 annual in-service days, a minimum of 4 hours of Janitors input will be provided at each Primary School. Input may be less than 4 hours per day during school holiday periods. We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a Primary school has been unable to open to pupils due to our inability to provide a satisfactory janitorial service.		

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will provide janitorial support to every (non 3Rs) secondary school between 07:00 and 18:00 on each day when the school is open to pupils.		100%
Janitorial service is delivered by the in-house team at all non-3Rs Secondary schools in the city, throughout the year. For the 190 days of the school session plus the 5 annual in-service days, janitorial service will be provided between 07:00 and 18:00 at each Secondary School. Input may be for a shorter duration during school holiday periods. We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a Secondary school has been unable to open to pupils due to our inability to provide a satisfactory janitorial service.		

3. Staff – Facilities Management









Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter)	2		1		0			
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No Quarter)	2		9		6			

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost - Facilities	7.8		8.1		8.4		4.8	
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	2.88		2.48		2.61			
Establishment actual FTE	518.08		519.51		519.05			
Establishment actual FTE (Catering)	173.65		175.62		175.62			
Establishment actual FTE (Cleaning)	230.93		229.72		228.97			
Establishment actual FTE (Janitorial)	64.34		65.19		65.54			
Establishment actual FTE (Office & Building Management)	15.89		15.89		15.89			
Establishment actual FTE (Passenger Transport Unit)	31.37		31.19		31.13			

*Service Commentary – Sickness Absence Average Number of Days Lost – Facilities

Having come from a high point of 16.4 average days lost in April 2024, through the hard work of the service with support from Employee Relations colleagues, average days reduced to a low point of 7.7 days lost in December 2024. A relatively low number of relatively long term and complicated absence cases have seen average days lost increase slightly over the early months of 2025, to an average of 8.4 days lost in March 2025. The service continues to manage all absences diligently, ensuring that the correct interventions are implemented at the appropriate stages, whilst also ensuring that employees who are suffering from sickness absence are supported through these processes.

















4. Finance & Controls - Facilities Management

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Inspection - Number of overdue corrective actions requests as at month end	0		0		0		0	
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	89.8%		98.8%		107.8%		100%	









Governance

















Protective Services

1. Citizen – Protective Services

















Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received - Protective Services	3		8		14			
% of complaints resolved within timescale - Protective Services	100%		100%		85.7%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Protective Services	0%		12.5%		0%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Protective Services	0		0		0			

2. Processes - Protective Services









Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% of Samples reported within specified turnaround times (Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory)	76.3%		62.5%		71.4%		80%	
*% of registered tobacco retailers visited to give Business Advice on compliance with tobacco legislation - Year to Date	22%		28.7%		33.3%		20%	

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*% of registered tobacco retailers subjected to Test Purchasing for retailer compliance with age restrictions - Year to Date	2%		6.7%		16%		10%	
*% of registered Nicotine Vapour Products retailers visited to give Business Advice on compliance with legislation - Year to Date	27.3%		28.3%		33.3%		20%	
*% of registered Nicotine Vapour Products retailers subjected to Test Purchasing for retailer compliance with age restrictions - Year to Date	6.7%		12.2%		20%		10%	
% of scheduled food service premises inspections (where access was possible) carried out on time, in line with Food Regulatory Service Plan	100%		100%		100%		100%	









*The Scottish Government (SG) has set targets for all local authority Trading Standards Services to carry out test purchasing from retail premises to test for compliance with the age restriction on the supply of tobacco and nicotine vaping products (e-cigarettes) set out in the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010. The requirement is that 10% of registered tobacco and e-cigarettes retailers in each jurisdiction should be tested on an annual basis. Accordingly, at the beginning of each financial year Aberdeen City Council Trading Standards service plans this work so that these targets are achieved (along with the related PI of visiting 20% of each to provide Business Advice). This work is dependent upon the availability of 16 year old volunteers to work alongside officers. That notwithstanding, this service regularly achieves these targets, which are reported to the SG via the Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS).













Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Non-Domestic Noise % responded to within 2 days	100%		100%		100%		100%	
High Priority Pest Control % responded to within 2 days	97.8%		100%		100%		100%	
High Priority Public Health % responded to within 2 days	100%		94.9%		98.6%		100%	
Dog Fouling - % responded to within 2 days	100%		100%		98.1%		100%	

2. Processes – Community Safety





Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
YTD Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported which were resolved	95.8%		96.67%		98.49%		100%	
YTD % of calls attended to by the ASBIT Team within 1 hour	95.5%		95.9%		96.1%		95%	





3. Staff - Protective Services

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No. In Quarter - Protective Services)	0		0		0			
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No. In Quarter - Protective Services)	0		0		0			

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – Protective Services	4.9		5.3		5		4.8	
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	0.61		0.42		0.4			
Establishment actual FTE	60.33		59.86		59.81			

4. Finance & Controls - Protective Services

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% of External Quality Assurance reported results that were satisfactory (Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory)	94.7%		96.6%		97.1%		95%	

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	74.5%		81.8%		89.1%		100%	

Corporate Services

People & Citizen Services













1. Citizen – People & Citizen Services

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received – People & Citizen Services	97		134		108			
% of complaints resolved within timescale – People & Citizen Services	90.7%		94.8%		87%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – People & Citizen Services	9.3%		40.3%		32.4%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – People & Citizen Services	4		6		6			







Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Financial Inclusion - No of open cases per month	329		205		296			
Financial Inclusion - No of enquiries per month	135		134		173			

2. Processes – People & Citizen Services









Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Average number of days to process new Housing Benefit claims	15.09		15.12		14.93		25	
Average number of days to process change of circumstances in relation to Housing Benefit claims	7.76		7.41		6.11		12	
Correct amount of Housing Benefit paid to customer (monthly)	97.14%		97.2%		97.34%		95%	









Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Customer Contact Centre calls answered within target timescale (180 seconds)	80.21%		81.31%		81.24%		80%	
*% Copy birth, death, marriage and civil partnership certificates issued within target timescale (7 days)	94.83%		99.46%		78.14%		100%	
Welfare Rights - % of Successful Appeals	50%		100%		75%			





*Due to the extended network issues experienced during March, it was not possible to print the certificates meaning that significant numbers were issued late.

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Crisis Grant applications processed within 2 working days	98.38%		98.68%		Data not yet released by Scottish Government		100%	
% Community Care Grant applications processed within 15 working days	73.04%		51.22%				100%	













3. Staff – People & Citizen Services

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – People & Citizen Services)	0		0		0			
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – People & Citizen Services)	0		0		0			

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – People & Citizen Services	3.9		4		4.1		4.8	
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	1.21		1.07		1.19			












Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Establishment actual FTE	353.02		354.8		349.58			

4. Finance & Controls – People & Citizen Services

















Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Council Tax Cash Collected (In Year) - monthly	£132m		£135.6m		£138.1m		£138.9m	
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	76.7%		84.6%		92.5%		100%	
Financial Inclusion - Total Financial Gains Achieved per month	£285,086		£532,123		£352,100			

Digital and Technology

1. Citizen – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received – Digital and Technology	0				1			
% of complaints resolved within timescale – Digital and Technology	No complaints Q2/Q3				100%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Digital and Technology					100%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – Digital and Technology					0			

2. Processes – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Percentage of Critical system availability- average (monthly)	99.5%		99.5%		99.5%		99.5%	
% Incidents logged by IT Helpdesk (including Self-Serve) resolved right first time	77,3%		72.1%		62%		70%	
*% Priority 1 and 2 incidents closed in timescale	50%		90%		14.3%		99.5%	
*% Priority 3 – 5 incidents closed in timescale	75.6%		76.3%		75.7%		95%	

*Service Commentary – Priority Incidents 1 and 2 / 3-5 closed in timescale









This indicator shows the percentage of Priority 1 and 2 calls closed within agreed timescale. Priority 1 incidents should be resolved within 4 hours and Priority 2 within 8 hours. Also monitored are Priority 3, 4 and 5 incidents which have timescales of 3, 5 and 30 days respectively.

Analysts use the information available to assess the number of people affected, whether a reasonable workaround is available and whether there are critical work deadlines, amongst other factors, to decide the priorities for incidents. As such, knowledge and judgement are involved in the setting priorities. Reporting of this measure began in April 2020 when it was implemented as an agreed Service Standard. The 2024/25 target for Priority 1 and 2 incidents closed in time scale is currently 99.5% and for Priority 3-5 incidents, 95%.

During 2024/25, there have been an average of 5 Priority 1 and 2 incidents logged per month, with an average of 3 resolved in time. For the same period, there have been an average of 1,957 Priority 3-5 incidents logged with an average of 1,540 resolved in time.

Measures have been taken to adjust the priority of incidents logged by our monitoring systems to reflect when the premises affected are not in use (for example, schools that are closed for the holidays). Measures have also been taken to reduce the number and priority of incidents triggered by automatic system alerts from cloud computing monitoring tools, now that the performance and reliability of the applications and services deployed have been established. These factors, along with a continuing focus on good customer service, mean that there is an emphasis on ensuring that calls are resolved in a way that is satisfactory to the customer.

3. Staff – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Digital and Technology)	0		0		0			
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Digital and Technology)	0		0		0			

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – Digital & Technology	1.2		1		1		4.8	
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	0.4		0.35		0.87			
Establishment actual FTE	89.2		89.84		91.88			

4. Finance & Controls – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	73.8%		81.1%		88.7%		100%	

Families & Communities

Housing





































1. Citizen – Housing

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received – Housing	82		65		55			
*% of complaints resolved within timescale - Housing	80.5%		75.4%		58.2%		75%	
% of complaints with atleast one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Housing	34.1%		40%		29.1%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Housing	1		2		4			









***Service Commentary - % of complaints resolved within timescale – Housing**













It is recognised that there has been a reduction in performance for complaints being resolved within timescale reported, most significantly in Q4. Resources have now been put in place to address this and we will continue to monitor the impact to ensure that overall performance improves.

2. Processes – Housing













Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
YTD % of cases reassessed as being homeless or potentially homeless within 12 months* of a previous case being closed. (Data Provided by Scottish Government on a Quarterly Basis)	3.9%		3.9%		3.9%		4%	
YTD % of statutory homeless decisions reached within 28 Days Unintentional R RTP	58.6%		58.7%		58.4%		100%	
YTD Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless (R RTP)	137.7		136.6		134.3		100	
Number of Statutory Homeless Households Residing in Temporary Accommodation at Month End	406		384		377			
The YTD number of Legal repossessions following decree (Arrears) - Citywide	50		55		60			
Housing Applications processed 28 days YTD %	92.8%		95.2%		95.9%		100%	
Statutory Customer Service Actions - Decisions/Outcomes within statutory timescale	88.1%		88.2%		87%		100%	
The YTD Average time taken to re-let all properties (Citywide - days)	270.1		275.7		280.4		210	
Void properties awaiting / undergoing preparation for relet	1,840		1,840		1,783			

3. Staff – Housing

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Housing)	0		0		0			
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Housing)	1		1		1			





Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target (Corporate Average)	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – Housing	3.3		3.3		3.4		4.8	
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	1.9		1.49		1.61			
Establishment actual FTE	85.13		85.53		86.33			

4. Finance & Controls – Housing





Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	93.9%		103%		114%		100%	
Gross rent Arrears as a percentage of Rent due	19.24%		19.53%		17.86%		9.5%	
Rent loss due to voids - Citywide - YTD average	8.45%		8.42%		8.38%		4.62%	

Housing Revenue Account

3. Staff – Housing Revenue Account

















































Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Establishment actual FTE	183.39		187.62		186.95			

4. Finance & Controls – Housing Revenue Account

Performance Indicator	Jan 2025		Feb 2025		Mar 2025		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	83.2%		91.5%		99.8%		100%	





Corporate




1. Citizen – Corporate

Performance Indicator	Q2 2024/25		Q3 2024/25		Q4 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
No. of Non-complex Subject Access Requests received	89		76		92			
% Non-complex Subject Access Requests responded to within 1 month	84.3%		89.5%		92.4%		80%	
No. of Complex Subject Access Requests received	6		11		5			
*% Complex Subject Access Requests responded to within 3 months	83.3%		27.3%		40%		70%	
No. of Environmental Information Regulation requests received	81		102		113			
% of Environmental Info Requests replied to within 20 working days - Corporate	71.6%		80.4%		75.2%		85%	
No. of Freedom of Information requests received	315		342		351			
% of Freedom of Information requests replied to within 20 working days - Corporate	85.1%		80.1%		77.5%		85%	
No. of Access to School Records requests received	7		3		5			
% Access to School Records requests responded to within 15 school days	100%		100%		100%		100%	
No. of Data Protection Right requests received	7		3		12			
% Data Protection Right requests responded to within 1 month	100%		100%		100%		100%	

***Service Commentary - % Complex Subject Access Requests responded to within 3 months**

We have been addressing a significant level of outstanding Subject Access Requests (SARs) over the past year, with an action plan in place to also improve ongoing performance. The backlog is now almost fully addressed and ongoing overall performance is also showing significant improvement (93% overall compliance in March 2025 for complex and non-complex SARs). Due to lower volumes of complex SARs received and the lengthy time that it takes to complete such requests, meeting the service standard for complex SARs still remains a challenge. However, our overall SAR performance is now meeting the Information Commissioner's expectations.

PI Status	
	Alert (figure more than 20% out with target)
	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target and being monitored)
	OK (figure within target or better)
	Data Only

Long Term Trends	
	Improving/Increasing
	No or Limited Change/Stable
	Getting Worse/Decreasing

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen City's Affordable Housing Delivery Programme
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/120
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Mel Booth
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on Aberdeen City's Affordable Housing Delivery Programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Note the progress on delivery of Aberdeen City's Affordable Housing Delivery Programme.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Affordable Housing Supply Programme

- 3.1.1 £12.508m was allocated to Aberdeen City Council in 2024/25 through the Scottish Government's affordable housing supply programme which was fully utilised.
- 3.1.2 In 2024/25 there were 459 affordable housing completions in Aberdeen through the affordable housing supply programme. 34 of these homes were fully wheelchair accessible and 8 were specialist provision homes. 472 homes are projected for completion in 2025/26.
- 3.1.3 The table below shows the location, housing provider, and type of affordable homes completed in 2024/25. It shows that Aberdeen City Council contributed to the delivery of an additional 242 affordable homes.

Location	Housing Provider	Type	No. of units
Council Buy Backs	ACC	Social Rent	42
Cloverhill	ACC	Social Rent	125
Kaimhill	ACC	Social Rent	35
Tillydrone	ACC	Social Rent	40
Falkland Avenue	Hillcrest	Social Rent	12
Falkland Avenue	Hillcrest	Mid-Market Rent	44
Countesswells	Osprey	Social Rent	5
Craigievar	Osprey	Social Rent	8
Ellon Road	Osprey	Social Rent	6
Riverside	Places for People	Social Rent	16
Persley Den	Sanctuary	Social Rent	126
Total			459

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 All new affordable homes must meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) which was introduced in 2014. As a result, homes in the social rented sector are now some of the most energy efficient in Scotland which has a positive impact on the environment; the provision of affordable housing contributes to this positive impact.

7. RISK

- 7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risk	Target Risk Level (L, M, H)	Mitigation	Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure to deliver affordable housing.	L	The Council and RSL partners have ambitious new build	Yes

			programmes to deliver affordable housing across the city.	
Compliance	Provision of affordable housing ensures compliance with the council's duty to house households. Failure to deliver may result in there being insufficient housing to meet the demand.	M	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes
Operational	Provision of affordable housing is a priority for residents of Aberdeen City Council. Failure to deliver may result in housing need and demand levels not being met.	M	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes
Financial	Failure to consider appropriate funding may result in need not being met.	L	Ensure discussions on funding are held at the appropriate times.	Yes
Reputational	Failure to fully utilise funds may harm the council's reputation when affordable housing is much needed across the city.	L	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes
Environment / Climate	Failure to provide affordable housing which is built to current building regulations and has a reduced carbon footprint may result in increased carbon emissions from housing.	L	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: We will work with partners to improve the stock and variety of Council and social housing across the city, ensuring it meets the varying needs of our citizens and provides more choice for our older citizens.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposal within this report supports the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 2 – 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026. The affordable housing programme represents significant investment in the city which contributes to a prosperous economy and relates to 1.1 of the LOIP.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposal within this report supports the delivery Stretch Outcome 10 - Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the <u>City Region Deal</u> , <u>Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy</u> , and the <u>Local Development Plan</u> through the delivery of affordable housing.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer – Housing, on 24/04/2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Previous committee reports in relation to this are detailed below:

CGR [PLA/18/061](#) 18 September 2018
CGR [PLA/19/318](#) 26 September 2019
CGR [COM 20/181](#) 28 October 2020
CGR [COM 21/169](#) 25 August 2021
CGR [COM 22/197](#) 21 September 2022
CGR [COM/23/322](#) 14 November 2023
CHPP [F&C/24/248](#) 05 September 2024

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	27 May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Housing Board Bi-Annual Report (December to May 2025)
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/119
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth and Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Stephen Booth, Jacqui McKenzie and Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 30 May 2024, the Executive Director Families and Communities was instructed to present Committee with bi-annual reports to enable Committee oversight of all housing improvement activity being coordinated by the Housing Board.
- 1.2 At the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee meeting on 21 November 2024, the Chief Officer - Housing was instructed to report the implications of resource planning assumptions made by Scottish Government when known.
- 1.3 This report aims to satisfy both instructions.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Note the progress made by the Housing Board from December 2024 to May 2025;
- 2.2 Endorse the amended Plan available in Appendix A;
- 2.3 Instruct the Housing Board to present an amended and measurable Improvement Plan for approval as part of the Housing Board Bi-Annual Report in November 2025;
- 2.4 Note the key data summary available in Appendix B;
- 2.5 Note the Terms of Reference for the Cross Party Working Group available in Appendix C;

- 2.6 Welcome the findings of the Aberdeen Tenant Service Review Group available in Appendix D;
- 2.7 Instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to work with the Aberdeen Tenant Service Review Group to positively respond to the findings of their review and report progress against tenant recommendations through a subsequent Housing Board Bi-Annual Report;
- 2.8 Approve the arranged access procedure available in Appendix E in relation to Electrical Installation Condition Report inspections to ensure that all Council owned properties comply with necessary health and safety checks;
- 2.9 Instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to implement the Quality Improvement Framework available in Appendix F;
- 2.10 Instruct the Chief Officer Housing to evaluate the impact of the Quality Improvement Framework on an annual basis and present an updated Framework to Committee for approval within one calendar year as part of the May Housing Board Bi-Annual Report;
- 2.11 Note the homeless benchmarking summary report available in Appendix G; and
- 2.12 Note the resource planning assumptions issued by Scottish Government on 18 March 2025 for the affordable housing supply programme in 2025/26;

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 As outlined in [F&C/24/176](#), all housing improvement activity continues to be coordinated by the Housing Board.
- 3.2 The Housing Board has an iterative plan shared in the November 2024 Housing Board Bi-Annual Report ([F&C/24/335](#)) which continues to be updated as the root cause of issues being experienced by the Housing Service and tenants is better understood (Appendix A). In keeping with the approach used in November 2024, proposed new additions to the Plan are recorded in red, with completed actions recommended for removal greyed and in green. Members are asked to endorse the changes being proposed and note that the iterative approach being taken is helping to realise improvements across many core measures as outlined in Appendix B.
- 3.3 The appropriateness of the Plan continues to be reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure that work is informed and prioritised in light of progress, on-going evaluation and analysis of data. The Housing Board now has a far greater understanding of some of the problems being faced. As a Board we make most progress in addressing the problems identified when we have clarity around the problem to be solved and guard against too quickly jumping to implement one single and simple solution. In summary, a test and learn approach is proving most impactful and this learning has been used to help develop our Quality Improvement Framework discussed further at paragraph 3.44.
- 3.4 As a result of our increased knowledge of some of the problems and improved arrangements for self-evaluation, the Housing Board propose to develop a refreshed plan. As well as reflecting our learning to date, it is proposed that the

new plan be aligned with the anticipated Housing Asset Model, Local Housing Strategy and 30 Year Business Plan to ensure cohesion. It is proposed that the refreshed Plan now concentrates on the outcomes we seek to improve rather than a series of focus areas. Officers propose to incorporate high level SMART targets to enable effective scrutiny of progress, whilst keeping sufficient flexibility in approach to ensure that the iterative approach taken to date continues given the success of this approach to date. With Member approval, the Housing Board will develop a new high level Plan as the Housing Asset Model and Local Housing Strategy is agreed and present an updated Plan for approval in November 2025.

- 3.5 The Void Property Member / Officer Working Group continues to meet, and a formal Terms of Reference has been agreed (Appendix C). The February meeting of the Working Group reviewed progress against the Housing Board Plan, explored in more detail the work being undertaken to develop the Housing Asset Plan/Model and explored the Housing Board Data Dashboard. A further meeting is scheduled for May 2025. These meetings continue to provide a helpful opportunity for officers to benefit from support and challenge from Elected Members.
- 3.6 Members will be aware that the Housing Board has structured its current plan around key areas of focus. Paragraphs 3.5 - 3.74 of this report provide a high level overview of action taken against these key areas since progress was last reported in November 2024.
- 3.7 **Area of Focus: Improved data management through the establishment of a Housing Data Dashboard.**

The now well established Housing Board Data Dashboard is updated on a weekly basis to inform the work of operational teams. The Dashboard is reviewed formally on a monthly basis by the Housing Board and this review helps officers track the impact of any changes made. As outlined in Appendix B, taking an iterative and data led approach is helping to realise improvements across a number of areas:

- There are now 418 fewer housing voids in March 2025 than in July 2024.
- There are 28.60% fewer buy backs sitting void in March 2025 than in July 2024.
- There has been a 19.5% increase in relets over 2024/25.
- Refusal rates are declining.
- Abandonments reduced by 21% over 2024/25.
- Tenancy Sustainment has improved slightly.
- There has been a reduction in gross rent arrears.
- Homeless applications have reduced by 1.9% in 2024/25.
- The number of statutory decisions taken has increased by 145 (12.1%) with 1,278 decisions reached in 2023/24 compared to 1,432 in 2024/25.
- Homeless journey times have reduced by 28 days, sitting at an average of 134 days in 2024/25 compared to 162 in 2023/24.
- The use of hotel accommodation for those presenting as homeless has reduced by 81% from 118 as of 31st March 2024 to 23 at the 31st March 2025.
- There has been a 15% increase in the number of properties returned from Building Services to Housing for letting.

Slight changes continue to be made to the dashboard to ensure that it contains all of the information required to support our improvement agenda, and the adoption of the new NEC system will greatly support our oversight of repairs and maintenance data.

3.8 Formal review of the Data Dashboard by the Housing Board has triggered further analysis in a number of areas. Since November, the Board has undertaken more detailed exploration of homelessness benchmarking data, worked to understand the death void path, extended understanding around abandonments, data around tenants who serve custodial sentences and those who require a period of hospitalisation, as well as working to understand levels of direct debit payment and demand for 4 bedroomed properties. Work to understand the circumstances that lead to properties being void for long periods has almost concluded.

3.9 As each area is explored in greater detail, a number of actions are agreed. For example, our management information system is currently configured to record those who vacate their properties due to a hospital stay and imprisonment together. Members will appreciate the very different needs both groups. As a result of the analysis undertaken, we have agreed to split the recording of those who vacate their properties due to a hospital stay or imprisonment so that we have a clearer picture of demand and are better able to evaluate the impact of our system on both groups. Another example stems from our exploration of the data around abandonments. Understanding the needs of those who abandon their properties is helping to inform other policy areas, such as the eligibility criteria for the Rent Assistance Fund.

3.10 **Evaluation of the Housing Board**

The Housing Board has now been operational for a full year. The one year anniversary triggered an evaluation of the success of the Housing Board approach to help determine next steps.

3.11 Positives noted included:

- Bringing officers from different clusters together around a common purpose is helping to join things up.
- Monthly board meetings enable effective sharing of progress through Housing Bi-Annual Reports and to inform the narrative to support Regulatory returns.
- The very high level of curiosity, candour and compromise from officers who routinely attend, and levels of preparation for the Board meetings by officers of the Board.
- Further analysis from the data team is helping us know where to look and take timely action.

3.12 Next steps identified include the need to:

- Have improved oversight of the capital programme now that a decision has been taken for oversight of this work to be through the Housing Board.
- Establish short term working groups to look at increasing the uptake of capital works and develop further understanding around Damp and Mould issues within our properties.
- Think about the frequency of reporting some areas to the Housing Board so that our agendas don't become unmanageable.

- Pace our asks of the data team so we don't have a large number of recommendations that can't all be implemented. A first step to managing this would be to set up a tracker of all of the recommendations so we can review and prioritise them when our capacity increases.
- Refresh membership to take account of new structures.

3.13 All of the next steps have now been or are in the process of being actioned. The Housing Board will undertake a further evaluation in March 2026.

Scottish Housing Regulator changes

3.14 The Board has reviewed the changed data sets regarding damp and mould due to be reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) from April 2025. Some of the reporting will be challenging without the new NEC module scheduled for implementation later in the year and a short term solution has been developed to ensure compliance with Regulator expectations. The Board has defined responsibilities for data collection and as noted is establishing a short life working group to consider a range of connected issues including training requirements, best practise, information leaflets, ventilation issues, technological advances, remote monitoring and capital improvements. This is likely to result in a number of test of change projects in the coming 24 months.

Repairs and maintenance NEC system

3.15 As Members are aware, the new NEC system will support the logging and scheduling of works and provide proactive and real-time communication to tenants. Moving to this system will help strengthen central oversight and decision making and help officers prioritise work on voids properties based on demand. A Programme manager for the NEC roll out has been recruited. An Implementation Plan has been put in place with a series of workshops undertaken to support effective implementation, whilst looking to introduce process and transformational change in delivery at the same time. Workshops have been held to explore how the system will better manage Asset data and storage of building data by component, response repairs and Capital programming with further workshops planned in the next quarter on voids processes, asbestos information and planned and statutory maintenance works. The system is on track to start being tested from Summer 2025, with module roll-out later this year.

Ukrainian Longer Term Resettlement Fund

3.16 In September 2022, the Scottish Government launched the Ukraine Longer-Term Resettlement Fund (ULTRF) to bring Local Authority (LA) and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) empty properties back into use. ACC successfully applied for £6.15m to refurbish 500 void Council properties for Ukrainian households arriving into the UK or residing temporarily in Welcome Accommodation (WA). Grant conditions stipulate that the properties are available for the duration of the visas issued to the families and households, up to three years.

3.17 Currently, 450 of the 500 properties are tenanted. The vacant properties, whilst held vacant, constitute a cost to the Local Authority in terms of Council tax payments and lack of rental income and contribute to our housing voids.

3.18 The policy landscape has significantly changed. The UK Government has confirmed that a new Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme (opened on 4 February 2025) will enable successful applicants to be granted a further

period of leave to remain for up to 18 months during which time they will have the same rights and entitlements to access work, benefits, healthcare and education as they currently have. Thank You Payments to Hosts who accommodate Ukrainians in their own homes will reduce and ultimately cease and all Welcome Accommodation closed on 31 March 2025. There are over 600 Ukrainians still living in hotels across Scotland, the vast majority of whom are single persons living in Edinburgh. Scottish Government has advised that properties should be made available to those in Welcome Accommodation, both within the relevant local authority and nationally. For clarity, there are no Ukrainians living in Welcome Accommodation (hotels) in Aberdeen.

- 3.19 It is highly likely that the vast majority of Ukrainians currently in ACC tenancies will apply and be granted leave to remain for a further 18 months. This means that the expected return of the 450 tenanted properties will now be delayed. The stopping of thank-you payments may trigger hosts to ask their Ukrainian guests to find alternative accommodation, and this may see an increase in requests for Council properties. Those still living in hotels out with Aberdeen will require settled accommodation, although only 10 of our held properties are for single persons and there are suggestions that those currently living in Edinburgh have made connections locally and wish to remain there.
- 3.20 Having reviewed the dynamic situation, the Housing Board has actively engaged with the Scottish Government to determine if there are Ukrainians living in welcome hotels across Scotland who would like to access a home in Aberdeen. A communication has also been issued to those in Host accommodation to advise of the limited availability of properties and the opportunities for mainstream accommodation in the future. Having exhausted all opportunities to make use of the 50 properties as intended, a request has been formally submitted to Scottish Government to allow those 50 properties to be brought back into general use given the demands on our housing system.

Scottish Housing Regulator Return and Annual Assurance Statement

- 3.21 Officers are currently working across Clusters to submit the Scottish Housing Regulator Return and have commenced work to complete the Annual Assurance Statement. The statement is on track to be presented to Committee in August 2025 and will draw from the Scottish Housing Regulator Return.
- 3.22 The Scottish Housing Regulator has published their [Engagement Plan](#) for the Council. As anticipated, the Regulator will engage with Aberdeen City about its services for people who are homeless, its site(s) for Gypsy/Travellers, service quality, stock quality and tenant and resident safety. Members should note that the planned engagement around homelessness services and Gypsy/Traveller sites is common to all Engagement Plans.
- 3.23 The established service performance review by the Regulator has guided a particular focus on tenant satisfaction, void management, rent arrears and tenancy sustainment.
- 3.24 **Area of Focus: Alignment and interconnectivity of Housing Strategies and Plans to ensure decision making is consistent and helps secure improvement in the longer term.**

It is proposed that relevant recommendations from the formal reports from the public inquiry into the tragic events at the Grenfell Tower, be added to our

workplan. An internal Officer Group has been established to consider the recommendations which apply to the Council. A readiness check is currently underway to support longer term planning.

- 3.25 A draft Local Housing Strategy (LHS), firmly based on the needs of those living in the city has been produced and is currently being consulted upon. Members will note that detail of the LHS engagement plan was provided in [F&C/25/043](#) in March 2025. The engagement is going extremely well with over 1,300 responses received to date. Following instruction from the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in March, officers have also consulted the University College London's Institute of Health Equity, led by Professor Sir Michael Marmot, and Public Health Scotland, who are in partnership with the Council, through the "Collaboration for Health Equity in Scotland" to help inform the final Local Housing Strategy due to be presented to Committee for final approval in August 2025.
- 3.26 The Institute of Health Equity has shared that they believe that the draft Local Housing Strategy has a strong and welcome health and equity focus and situates housing as an important route to reduce health inequalities. They believe that the draft strategy identifies priority areas for housing which will improve the health of residents and reduce inequalities in health including healthy life expectancy and life expectancy.
- 3.27 The Institute of Health Equity made a number of proposals to further strengthen the focus on health and equity, highlight potential contributions from sectors either not already included or where their involvement is under developed, and some specific additions that are worthy of consideration. Officers will take account of the feedback as the final version of the Strategy is developed for approval by Committee in August 2025.
- 3.28 Members will be aware that the needs of those we welcome through various asylum and dispersal programmes was presented to Committee in March 2025. Progress against the Asylum Delivery Plan will be routinely monitored by the Housing Board, and this has been added to our Action Plan.
- 3.29 Work on the Asset Management Model is on-going, and the Void Property Member/Officer Working Group having had an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the anticipated output of the Asset Model. Work is currently underway to identify dates for similar briefings for all members in advance of the Asset Model being presented to Members for approval. Officers anticipate the first return of Asset Modelling data in late May and will then consider the implications of the data on our long term planning to enable a clear set of proposals to be presented to Members for approval alongside the HRA 30 year Plan.
- 3.30 Members will be aware that officers have an instruction to implement a hybrid model of care at Provost Hogg. Over the last year there has been a considerable change in the needs of tenants who reside there and in other supported facilities. Given that the draft Local Housing Strategy identifies further challenges in terms of supporting an aging population, officers are of the view that a better understanding of both the current and anticipated future population of our sheltered and very sheltered homes is required to ensure that decisions taken best support our tenants now and in the longer term. As a result, it is proposed that further analysis of current and future need be

undertaken before progressing the hybrid model of care. The need to undertake this detailed analysis will be factored into our Local Housing Strategy and feature in the next version of our Housing Board Plan.

- 3.31 The alignment of all key documents is thought important to help ensure full cohesion across strategies and plans. As a result, the HRA 30 year Business Plan will be updated and reported to Council on an annual basis and will take account of the Asset Management Plan and updated Local Housing Strategy (or progress made in delivering the Strategy once agreed by Committee) and the IJB Market Position Statement. An HRA budget protocol was agreed recently at Council.

Area of Focus: Improved tenancy management and tenant participation

- 3.32 The Aberdeen Housing Service Review Group (AHSRG) has been supported to undertake a review of Tenant & Resident Participation. This wide ranging tenant and resident led audit (available in Appendix D) has identified a number of areas for improvement which have been transferred into a shared Action Plan. The Action Plan will be monitored and updated on a bi-annual basis with progress reported through the established Bi Annual Reports.
- 3.33 Officers are exceptionally grateful for the time and energy the AHSRG have committed to undertaking the review and look forward to taking the actions identified forward with the group.

Eliciting tenant views

- 3.34 Following the very disappointing survey return rate on the Tenant Satisfaction Survey in 2023, an alternative approach to eliciting the voices of our tenants has been developed. Whilst the Scottish Housing Regulator states that social landlords of our size should, as a minimum, undertake 400 surveys, commissioning an independent external partner to undertake 1,300 interviews would provide a dataset we could have a high level of confidence in, and be able to drill down at housing management levels. The benefits of taking this approach would include:
- Longer interview times, which allows for more detailed responses.
 - Ability to ask numerous questions e.g. (35/45).
 - Ability to investigate complex issues.
 - Allow interviewees time to expand on their answers.
 - Answers are often more truthful and specific.
 - Allows interviewers time to establish a connection with respondents.
- 3.35 It is anticipated that the fieldwork for the survey will take place in August and September and be widely promoted, including through the various summer events and galas planned. The external partner will ensure that the data is thoroughly checked and cleansed to ensure its accuracy, consistency, and reliability. They will also check for bias to identify and mitigate any unfair or skewed patterns that could affect the analysis or outcomes. We will also seek to be able to extract information on the experiences of our tenants who have been affected by RAAC.
- 3.36 Given that we have undertaken three previous surveys in this manner, it will provide an opportunity to look at satisfaction levels over a 10-year period and

provide an opportunity to make direct comparisons. Officers have engaged with the Scottish Housing Regulator to agree a timescale for the refreshed Tenant Satisfaction Survey to be undertaken, in light of the 2025 consultation calendar.

Tenants involved in recruitment processes

- 3.37 Tenants were involved in the recruitment process for the Fairer Futures Partnership Lead. The tenants involved appreciated the opportunity to influence the identification of the successful candidate and will soon have the opportunity to work closely with him as we develop our model of Family Support. We will continue to seek opportunities for tenant involvement in recruitment.

Health and safety checks and programmes

- 3.38 Sadly, gaining entry to properties to complete necessary health and safety checks and programmes continues to be challenging. Officers have been giving particular attention to compliance with Electrical Installation Condition Report inspections were compliance currently sits at around 92% (a number of non-compliant properties form part of and elongate the void process). Whilst compliance has been rising, the Council's contractor reports increasing levels of No entries and refused entries (approx. 50% in February) giving increased concern going forward.
- 3.39 Considerable consideration has been given to how best to take this cross service work forward. A staffing business case is being brought forward to establish a specialist team to deliver this internally, with external contractor support (contract is currently managed through the repairs team) similar to how gas safety is successfully managed. Members should be aware that undertaking an EICR through an arranged access process will present some difficulties compared to gas works as the gas checks can be completed in the matter of minutes compared to EICR's which require access to the various electrical sockets and switches throughout a property and takes circa 3 hours to undertake, plus additional time to undertake any necessary repairs found.
- 3.40 The proposed arranged access procedure is attached as Appendix E. With Committee approval this approach will be implemented and kept under review with Committee notified of any necessary changes through future Bi-Annual Housing Board reports.

Rent Assistance Fund Evaluation

- 3.41 The scope of an evaluation of the Rent Assistance Fund has been approved by the Housing Board and the evaluation is now underway. Officers anticipate that the evaluation will be presented to Committee in August 2025.

Choice Based Letting (CBL)

- 3.42 The previously reported evaluation of CBL concluded that increasing applicant placed bids would have a positive impact on other areas such as levels of refusals and overall tenancy sustainment figures. Work continues to increase the number of those making use of Choice Based Lettings. Data is indicating a 20% increase in applicant placed bids since June 2023.
- 3.43 Data shows a decline in overall refusal rates compared with 2023/24 (56.10% in 2023/24 to 52.2% in 2024/25) and an overall increase in tenancy sustainment

from 89.33% to 90.26%. Officers have focussed on improving and increasing communication with applicants who have registered for housing online but not placed bids. Continued targeted supportive sessions with applicants on our urgent list, prior to the auto bid process, continues to be a priority. In addition, a training session has taken place with the Cyrenians, with further sessions planned for other partners support the most vulnerable applicants.

Rent Arrears

- 3.44 A Rent Arrears Improvement Charter is in place and reported to the Performance Board. Initiatives undertaken between December and May have concentrated on the Rent Assistance Fund and Small Balance Arrears.
- 3.45 In the first half of 24/25, the Rent Assistance Fund made 50 awards totalling £77,721. Work was undertaken to improve the number of awards by reviewing Static Balances, cases in court, eviction cases, new tenancies on Universal Credit and data from the LIFT database (Low Income Family Tracker) where there are households with a child, in relative poverty, in fuel poverty and covering their rent for at least 3 months. This was with the aim of making more awards to sustain tenancies. The 24/25 figure rose to 499 approved awards with a value of £450,830.50. Work will continue to review the Rent Assistant Fund into 25/26.
- 3.46 In year collection of rent is currently sitting at 97%, this compares favourably with other local authorities. The 24/25 benchmarking process with other local authorities was undertaken to identify differences in the former tenancy arrears process. The main difference identified was the lack of debt being written off by Aberdeen City Council (below 10% in ACC compared to a 30% average in our Family Group) and steps have been taken to better mirror the process utilised in other local authorities with revised working practices put in place alongside the Council's debt collection provider. All debt written off has been agreed with the Finance Team.
- 3.47 Former tenancy arrears collection has also been analysed. For 2023/24 the average Scottish local authority collection amount was £205,090 (24/25 data is not yet available). Aberdeen City achieved a collection amount of £552,796 for 24/25. Implementation of revised processes has realised a reduction in the debt outstanding from £6.4m in 23/24 to £5.2m in 24/25 and the number of Former Tenancy Arrears accounts has reduced from 3,659 to 2,243. There is confidence that the collection of monies due is improving due to the revised process implemented by utilising the Council Debt Collection agents
- 3.48 A number of process changes have already been implemented for current tenancies. Consideration is now focusing on small scale tests of change. One example of proposed activity is to target tenants with an arrears balance of less than £400. Although this only equates to debt of approx. £800,000 there are 5,677 tenants within this range in debt to the council. A test of change has been completed and has reduced the percentage of small balances from 53.54% in 23/24 to 45.86% in 24/25. It is proposed that this process becomes a regular action whilst refining the process from the lessons learnt in the test for change.

- 3.49 Overall the final position for 24/25 shows the overall Gross Arrears for all years as a percentage of Rent Due has reduced from 17.68% to 14.31% after write offs.

Quality Improvement Framework

- 3.50 Considerable work has been undertaken to develop a Quality Improvement Framework for housing. The Framework, available in Appendix F, will help the Housing Service align working practices with the totality of the regulatory requirements. An instruction to implement the Framework will see officers refresh staff handbooks and learning and development programmes around the Quality Improvement Framework and also use this key document to help identify areas for the next version of the Housing Board Plan.
- 3.51 It is proposed that the service evaluate the impact of the framework on a yearly basis to ensure that learning triggers a refresh of the framework. This would see a refreshed Quality Improvement Framework being shared with Committee on a yearly basis.

Housing and Support Model

- 3.52 Further to the Housing and Support Officer Focus Groups reported in November, staff were surveyed to help prioritise actions around the model. It is clear that teams have good ideas on how to improve the service delivered to tenants. Teams will soon be asked to make some of their suggestions a reality by testing different ways of working across patch teams.

- 3.53 **Area of focus: Improvement in stock management to ensure an effective end to end process**

The level of housing voids continues to fluctuate, in part due to when new homes are made available, however a steadily reducing trend is now evident. A more proactive new build allocation flow chart has been developed with the aim of allocating as many properties as possible prior to them being formally handed over to the Housing Service in order to prevent new homes sitting as void as bids for the properties are made through our Choice Based Letting system.

- 3.54 Corporate Landlord and Housing continue to meet and progress improvements across the void process. One key change undertaken has been the development of a ready reckoner to help to proactively plan the work required in void properties. The structure of the voids team within building services is being reviewed and a number of new processes implemented around the initial inspection processes, digitisation of work planning, organising of trades and materials and identifying the range of different performance metrics to measure progress. Taking a 'test and learn' approach is helping to identify the changed actions that can positively contribute to a voids reduction, whilst also keeping a keen eye on any unintended consequences that can be counterproductive in a complex system.
- 3.55 The new Minimum Letting Standard outlined in November has been implemented with paint packs available to new tenants from 6th February. There has been no requests for paint packs or requests for decoration to be carried out on the tenant's behalf since February 6th although Members should note the relatively short sample to date. There is clear evidence that void properties are being returned for allocation to new tenants more quickly.

- 3.56 Following approval of the revised Acquisitions and Disposal Policy in November 2024, a tracker has been put in place and a number of properties identified for disposal, albeit identification of further properties is being delayed whilst options for RAAC homeowners are being considered.
- 3.57 Work towards meeting EESH2 requirements continues through capital planned works. We await further details on the proposed net zero standard for social housing.
- 3.58 **Area of focus: Delivery of Partnership Plan focused on preventing homelessness in Aberdeen.**
National homelessness data for 2023/24, published in late September 2024, has been analysed to understand the Council's position relative to other local authorities, other cities and the overall national mean. The presenting figures for Aberdeen City paint a mixed picture, yet the overall mid-term trends broadly mirror what is happening nationally, particularly in terms of increases in new and existing demands. There were however, encouraging signs that applicant demands began to plateau in 2023/24, yet do still remain high. The Board have quality assured the report (available in Appendix G) and accepted the recommendations which have been aligned with current workplans.
- 3.59 There has been a 1.9% reduction in applications from people experiencing or threatened with homelessness (from 1,780 applications in 2023/24 to 1,747 in 2024/25). A primary area of focus has been on reducing our use of unsuitable hotel accommodation. As a result of this focus, hotel occupancy rates have reduced by 81% (from 118 down to 23 rooms occupied at year end). To do this we have increased our use of suitable furnished temporary accommodation as well as focusing on securing decisions and outcomes more quickly for people in our homeless system. The overall objective is to reach a position where hotels are not being used to supplement our temporary accommodation stock, however it is important to highlight that certain fluctuations of demand are driven by factors that are outwith the direct control of the local authority.
- 3.60 The time taken to make decisions when a household presents as homeless has reduced from an average of 39.4 days to 30.1 days. Overall lets to homeless applicants has increased from 34% to 38.5%, our use of 2 bedroomed stock to accommodate single applicants has supported some of this increase. A discipline around being driven by performance data has supported these changes, with the average homeless journey reducing by 28 days to 134 days when compared to 163 days in 2023/24.
- 3.61 The Homewards Coalition continues to have a strong focus on preventing homelessness for single adults experiencing relationship breakdown and young people in the city. Most recently Invisible Cities was launched in Aberdeen in conjunction with Homewards, this provides an opportunity for people who have experienced homelessness to receive training and skills to become a tour guide in the city. In addition, furnishings have been provided to households through the innovative housing programme to support tenancy sustainment in Partnership with Langstane Housing Association.
- 3.62 Given the high proportion of homeless presentations who cite domestic violence as a factor in their homelessness, partners have been convened to look more

fully at the challenges. This area will be prioritised as we develop our model of Family Support.

Area of focus: RAAC

- 3.63 2 key committee reports regarding RAAC have been prepared and presented to Council (F&C/25/030) and Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee (CR&E/25/057).
- 3.64 Both reports have provided clear direction to officers and work to implement Committee instructions is on-going.
- 3.65 Following a successful recruitment process, dedicated SAMH support is now in place in addition to the supports put in place several months ago. Action is being taking to ensure that all homeowners impacted by RAAC know how to access this bespoke support.
- 3.66 Almost all tenants have been rehomed, with the last remaining 9 tenants (as of 9 April 2025) currently considering an offer of housing. As a result, the dedicated Housing and Support Team will re-join Patch teams. We will seek to engage with tenants who have been rehomed to further understand their experiences and any additional support they may require. Consideration is currently being given to the skills and resources required to support owners in light of our on-going engagement with owners.
- 3.67 Considerable time has been afforded to the consideration of the options presented by owners for consideration by Council.

Area of focus: Capital Programme - New Build Housing

- 3.68 The capital delivery of new build housing projects has continued throughout the last period, whereby we have seen the Practical Completion achieved for 28 units at the 206 Union Street refurbishment.
- 3.69 Good progress also continues to be made at the Cloverhill project which is a phased delivery of 536 units. At time of writing 341 units have been delivered with a further 29 units expected over the course of May 2025. The remaining properties will be handed over thereafter on a monthly basis between now and projection completion.
- 3.70 Works are now underway at Craighill (87 units) and the appointed Contractor is mobilising to commence construction works at Kincorth (195 units).
- 3.71 Design development towards achieving RIBA 3 continues for the Greenferns and Greenferns Landward sites with the intention of returning to Committee for further instruction later this calendar year.
- 3.72 The new Complex Care facility located at the former Stoneywood Primary School site is progressing with an expectation of Practical Completion in Summer 2025.

HRA Capital Programme

- 3.73 The Council's capital investment programme in its existing housing continued in this period, (such as window, kitchen, bathroom, roofing and services replacements, and fabric repairs).

- 3.74 The Capital and Corporate Landlord Clusters continued to work closely together to further identify and improve service efficiencies and our stock management. The works to move to NEC have given an impetus to consider the end to end process to create efficiencies, share data better and develop better information for tenants going forward.

Resource Planning Assumptions 2025/26

- 3.75 Members may recall that the Aberdeen City Strategic Housing Investment Plan was approved by this Committee on 21 November 2024 ([F&C/24/320](#)). The Chief Officer Housing was instructed to report back to committee with the implications of the resource planning assumptions when available from Scottish Government.
- 3.76 On 18 March 2025, Scottish Government confirmed that Aberdeen's provisional resource assumptions for the affordable housing supply programme in 2025/26 is £15.981m, with an additional £353,000 for acquisitions which gives a total of £16.334m. Officers are currently working with Scottish Government on prioritising projects for funding in 2025/26. It should be noted that the programme again has far more capacity than funding which means that Aberdeen City Council is well placed to be able to utilise any underspends from other areas, should they become available throughout the year.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Where there are financial implications noted against a particular project these are noted within the commentary. No additional financial requests are identified as a consequence of this report.
- 4.2 Any specialised or additional resource requirement will be identified within the HRA budget setting process.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report.

7. RISK

- 7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/c	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?

			ontrol actions	
Strategic	Risk that our approaches do not secure improvement.	Mitigated by being data led, taking time to understand the problems identified and then taking a test and learn approach to improvement. Mitigated by aligning all strategies and Plans.	L	Yes
Compliance	Failure to provide quality housing services will breach requirements of legislation and the Scottish Housing Regulator.	Adoption of the Housing Quality Improvement Framework and adoption of the NEC module.	L	Yes
Operational	Failure to maximise our use to resources	The cross council Housing Board guides the work of a range of Clusters to help maximise our use of resources.	L	Yes
Financial	Failure to have efficient and effective systems compromises the Council's ability to demonstrate best value	Continued focus on reducing void times and levels and increasing rent collection.	M	Yes
Reputational	Failure to improve the quality of Council homes may harm the Council's reputation if the properties need repairs.	The development of the Asset Model and adoption of the NEC system.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate				

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>A number of areas within 'Homes for the Future' will be positively impacted by this report. Of particular impact on the policy statement are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of an Asset Management Plan • The number of adaptations made to homes • Work to realise net zero targets • Increasing choice for tenants
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support improved healthy life expectancy by setting out steps towards achieving improvements in the housing stock.

Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions and improving the standard of housing by setting out steps towards achieving better quality housing.
Stretch Outcome 12	<i>Aims to 'Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City'.</i>
Regional and City Strategies	The work of the Housing Board is helping inform the development of our Local Housing Strategy.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for the Arranged Access Procedure EICR (detailed in Appendix E)
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme](#)

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Housing Emergency Action Plan
Appendix B – Housing Board Data Report
Appendix C – Housing Working Group Terms of Reference
Appendix D – Review of Tenant & Resident Participation
Appendix E – Arranged Access Procedure EICR (draft)
Appendix F – Housing Services Quality Improvement Framework
Appendix G – Homelessness Benchmarking Summary Report

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Housing Emergency Action Plan

(New additions to the Plan are shown in red, areas in green are nearing completion and will soon be removed).

Areas of focus	Outcomes sought	Actions required	Progress/by when?
Improved data management through the establishment of a Housing Data Dashboard.	Improved access and oversight of data to enable real time monitoring of performance at city and community level. Improved use of evaluation to amend arrangements based on local learning. Improved ability to predict further demand based on emerging trends.	Commission a digital system that helps to maintain a live profile of the condition, repair history, adaptations and demand of all property stock.	In progress, will start to be rolled out from summer 2025.
		Establish a partnership with NHSG to share data across health and housing to help inform targeting of support.	Continuing
		Improve the use of national data to help determine local priorities.	Continuing
		Monthly review of the Housing Data Dashboard to trigger re-setting the Action Plan based on local data.	Continuing
Alignment and interconnectivity of Housing Strategies and Plans to ensure decision making is consistent and helps secure improvement in the longer term.	High quality Local Housing Strategy (LHS) in place which has sufficient detail to support short and longer term planning	Public consultation on the LHS, subject to Strategy Board and Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee approval.	Completed – Remove from the Plan
		Final LHS to the Strategy Board and then Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee for approval in early 2025.	July/August 2025
	Improved information on the current and future needs of our tenants informing our	Interim HRA 30 Year Business Plan to be presented to Council (the interim Plan will be reviewed following completion of the Housing Asset Management Plan)	October 2025

	Asset Management Plan and 30 year HRA Plan.	Session planned for Elected Members on Asset Plan	August/September
	30 year HRA Plan in place that reflects the known needs of our tenants	Development and delivery of an HRA Budget protocol and Critical Path	By May 2025
		Routine oversight of Asylum and Dispersal Plan	In progress
	Housing Asset Management Plan in place to guide decision making	Data collection and interpretation to support the development of the Asset Model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define measure and classify assets Identify asset performance measures Establish an asset scoring system Scrutinise asset performance outcomes Appraise options to inform future investment decisions 	Continuing
		Presentation of draft Asset Management Model/Plan to Strategy Board, Housing Board and then to Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee for approval.	From August
Improved tenancy management and tenant participation.	Maximise the impact of Choice Based Letting	Test approaches to increasing the number of more vulnerable tenants engaging in Choice Based Lettings	Continuing
	Reduced levels of rent arrears	Develop and implement an improvement charter on Rent Arrears	Continuing
	Increased tenancy sustainment	Develop, secure approval for and implement a Rent Assistance Fund and keep the eligibility criteria under routine review	Continuing
	Improved tenant participation and satisfaction	Evaluate the impact of the Housing & Support Model to inform next steps	Continuing

		Map and evaluate the impact of existing tenant participation / engagement activity and determine next steps with tenants (including approach to surveys)	Continuing
		Co-delivery of the Aberdeen Tenant Service Review Group Recommendations	From May
Improvement in stock management to ensure an effective end to end process	Reduction in void rent loss	Create and agree end-to-end processes for work undertaken to Housing stock i.e. response repairs; planned maintenance, capital works; void work.	Continuing
	Utilisation of small scale testing prior to full implementation helps mitigate against risks	Develop a strategic outline case for non-traditional property types and then full business case, for submission to committee	To align with Asset Model
		Review of refusals to capital work upgrades and develop an approach to improve take up	Completed – Remove from the Plan
		Differentiation in policy and process around the different types of Buy Backs and what happens to them going forward.	In progress
		Put a clear plan in place to work towards net zero targets and include on-going reporting of progress to the Regulator with ECIR implementation.	In progress
		Review leadership structures of both Housing and Corporate Landlord to ensure effective joint leadership of operational teams to improve void performance	Complete and currently being consulted upon
		Culture and team building exercises for teams to build relationships and establish collaborative working	From August
		Review of process to engage with private owners for upgrade to communal areas etc.	TBC

		Evaluate the impact of approach to current checks prior to transfers to determine next steps	TBC
		Development of a void management approach to support demand led prioritisation of voids work.	From August
		Oversee performance of delayed discharge	From March
Delivery of Partnership Plan focused on preventing homelessness in Aberdeen.	Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City	Develop, in partnership, Project Charters, for each of the improvement projects subject to approval by the Homewards Steering Group and Community Planning Aberdeen Management Board.	In the final stages of development – Remove from the plan
	Reframing perceptions of homelessness	Develop, test and refine change ideas included within each of the project charters.	In progress
	Universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root-causes	Work with the Violence against Women and Girls Partnership to consider how best to prevent victims presenting as homeless	Continuing
	Ensuring adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location	On-going focus on reducing the use of hotels and temporary accommodation	In progress
RAAC	Delivery of person-centred support and keep tenants safe	RAAC Governance Board in place	Established and on-going
		Engagement with tenants to progress through the rehoming process	Almost concluded – Remove from the Plan

		Implement Council decision through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making use of Valuation Office to ensure impartial advice to owners • Commissioning and overseeing a programme plan in keeping with Council instruction • Engagement with owners to explore alternative options 	Continuing
		Commission additional mental health support for owners/tenants	Completed –on-going monitoring now required so amend wording.
Capital works	Successful delivery of capital programme	Deliver approved capital programme	Continuing
	Successful delivery of new build programme	Deliver approved new build programme	Continuing
Building Safety	Focus on prevention to ensure safety of residents	Assess readiness for Grenfell recommendations	In progress

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Appendix B

Housing Board data from July 2024 when the Housing Data Dashboard was first established

What is getting better?

There are now **418 less housing voids** (from 2,270 in July 2024 to 1852 at the end of March 2025). There is now a steadily reducing trend.

There has been a **28.60% reduction in the number of buy backs** sitting as voids (from 231 in July 2024 to 197 at the end of March 2025). The number of buy backs is currently sitting at 165.

There has been a **19.5% increase in relets over 2024/25** compared to 2023/24 (2,536 relets over 2024/25, compared to 2,123 in 2023/24).

Refusal rates have declined by 11.4% since July 2024.

Abandonments reduced by 18% over 2024/25 (from 171 in 2023/24 to 143 in 2024/25)

Tenancy Sustainment has improved slightly from 89.33% in 2023/24 to 90.26% in 2024/25

There has been a reduction in gross rent arrears from 18.25% in 2023/24 to 17.86% in 2024/25.

Homeless applications have reduced by 1.9% in 2024/25.

The number of statutory decisions taken has increased by 145 (12.1%) with 1,278 decisions reached in 2023/24 compared to 1,432 in 2024/25.

Homeless journey times have reduced by 28 days, sitting at an average of 134 days in 2024/25 compared to 163 in 2023/24.

The use of Hotel accommodation for those presenting as homeless has reduced by 81% from 118 as at 31st March 24 to 23 at the 31st March 2025.

There has been a 15% **increase in the number of properties returned from Building Services to Housing for letting** from 1,918 mainstream and 756 temporary homeless properties in 2023/24 to 2,188 mainstream and 890 temporary homeless properties in 2024/25.

What needs further focus?

The average days a property is void has increased by 48 days since July 2024. However, the changes made to the Minimum Letting Standard and amended void process are likely to show in the data as we move forward.

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Our Purpose

The Working Group will monitor progress against the established Housing Emergency Plan and seek assurance on void performance, homelessness and veterans housing.

Our Responsibilities

- Seek assurance on progress towards delivery of the agreed Housing Emergency Action Plan
- Scrutinise housing performance data (including voids data, homelessness and armed forces data) by receiving an extract from the Housing Data Dashboard
- Act as a sounding board to enable officers to explore potential solutions to issues being identified by the Officer led Housing Board in order to shape the recommendations presented by officers to Committee
- Highlight any emerging housing related issues for consideration by Officers

The Working Group

Members of the Working Group are:

- Cllr Miranda Radley (Chair)
- Cllr Dell Henrickson (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Mrs Stewart
- Cllr Boulton
- Cllr Graham
- Cllr Greig
- Cllr Brooks
- Eleanor Sheppard, Executive Director Families and Communities (responsible for working with the Chair to prepare the papers, set the agenda and take the action note)
- Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer Housing
- Stephen Booth, Chief Officer Corporate Landlord

The Way We Work

- Cllr Radley will chair the meeting, Cllr Henderson will act as vice Chair
- The Working Group will meet at least 3 times per year for 1 hour. Meetings will be held as near the start of the month as possible.
- A Teams site will hold all Working Group documentation. The One Note agenda will be updated in advance of each meeting.
- An update on progress towards the Housing Emergency Action Plan and data report will be linked to the agenda.

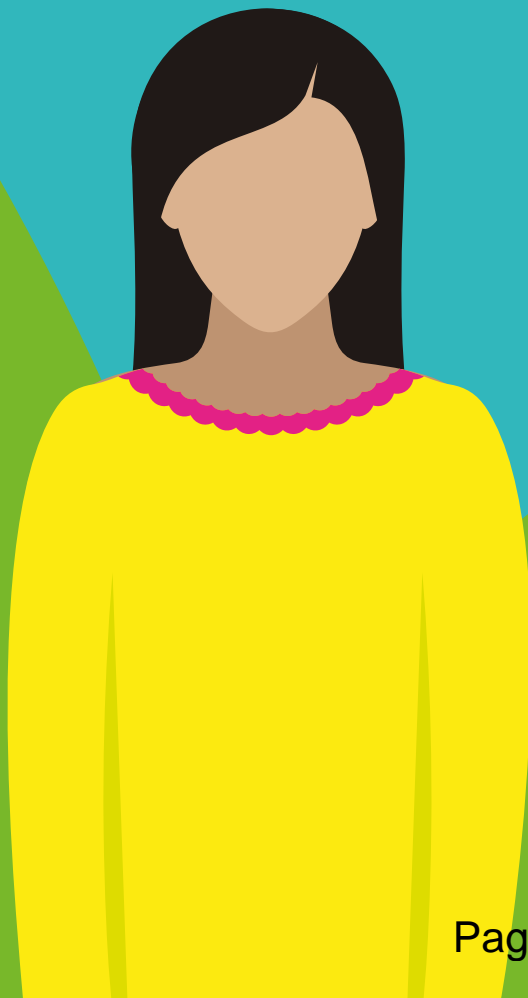
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A Review of Tenant & Resident Participation in Aberdeen City Council

Contents

Foreword	3
Context	4
Why did we choose Tenant Participation	5
General Observations	6
Recommendations	7
Citywide Groups	9
Tenants Survey & Results	11
Interviews with Staff	12
Acronyms	12
Appendix One: Action Plan	13



Foreword by Chair of Group Paul McMenemy

In 2004, the Aberdeen Tenant Service Review Group was established to review the Council's services. Following the implementation of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (known as the Charter) on 1st April 2012, it was renamed the Aberdeen Housing Service Review Group (AHSRG) to include not only tenants but other customers/service users.

The group is very proud of the awards we have won but also, we have travelled all over Scotland to other landlords and their tenants promoting the work we do – Working Together for Better Services.

This is the Group's seventh review – Tenant & Resident Participation having carried out our first report of the Housing Repairs in 2010- 2012. Community Safety in 2012-2013 and after a delay, the Housing Management in 2015-16, a re – review of Repairs in 2017, feedback review in 2019 and a review of Asset Management in 2021.

We would like to thank all the staff, tenants and residents who have participated in this review. They have provided great ideas and suggestions. Thank you to Carol Hannaford, Development Officer, Tenant & Resident Participation, Ellie McDonald Communication Business Adviser for her advice on the report, and Katrina Angus, Design and Graphics Officer, for the fantastic visual design.

I would also like to thank all the Members of the Review Group who gave of their time – John Duncan, Norma Groves, Geraldine Matthew, Vicky McKenzie, Lewis McGill, Fay Morrison, Betty Simpson, and Alex Wilson. Special thanks must also go to Lewis McGill, for the many hours he spent collating and producing this report.

The group are delighted the Action Plan has been presented to the Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee as part of the Housing Improvement Plan Report.

Paul McMenemy
Chair of Group

Foreword by Chief Officer Housing – Jacqui McKenzie

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Housing Service Review Group who have undertaken a review of tenant and resident participation in our housing services. Your dedication, time, and insightful contributions will be invaluable in shaping the future of our services, given the importance of tenant and resident participation in achieving this.

Your efforts in this review process have demonstrated a sense of responsibility and a genuine desire to enhance the quality of our housing services for everyone. Listening to your thoughts, experiences, and suggestions is so important. It is through this collaborative approach that we can identify areas for improvement, celebrate our successes, and work together to address challenges.

Your voices are essential in ensuring that our housing services remain responsive and meet the needs of all tenants. By participating, tenants can help shape policies, improve services and have a say in the decisions that affect their homes and communities.

As we move forward, we remain committed to ensuring there are opportunities for all tenants to participate in shaping our services, at a level they are comfortable with.

By working together, we can create a more connected and supportive environment, where every tenant feels heard, valued, and empowered.

Thank you once again for your commitment and I look forward to continuing working with you.

Jacqui McKenzie
Chief Officer - Housing

Context

Tenant Participation (TP) is a legal requirement as stated in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter. This set the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. 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.

The Guide to Successful Tenant Participation by the Scottish Government states:

“When working well, TP delivers clear benefits for tenants, staff, and landlords alike.”

These include:

- ▶ Better service delivery and improved outcomes for tenants which give value for money.
- ▶ Working together for common goals with respect and understanding.
- ▶ Informed and knowledgeable tenants who have the skills and confidence to influence decisions.
- ▶ Increased tenant satisfaction with their home and neighbourhood.
- ▶ Identifying actions for service and performance improvements and working together to implement these recommended improvements.

“The benefits of Tenant Participation and the improvements in service delivery they bring will evolve over time as effective information, communication and participation structures strengthen.

“TP and scrutiny can only be effective where landlords are committed to and have a culture of involving tenants in their decision-making process and where the principles of TP are adopted throughout the organisation.

Its success very much depends upon landlords embracing TP at the most senior level, including elected members and committee members who are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation and its culture.”



For this review the word Tenant will be used for Tenant, Resident or Service User

Why did we choose Tenant Participation?

The Group decided to review Tenant & Resident Participation because:

- ▶ The 2021 Tenant Satisfaction Survey said only 46.3% of tenants were satisfied with the opportunities to participate and only 69.5% were satisfied with the overall performance of the housing service.
- ▶ The current Tenant Participation structure is over 12 years old.
- ▶ The Tenant Participation Strategy is still in draft form, presenting an opportunity to quickly build the learning from this review into the final strategy.
- ▶ Due to a reduction in the number of dedicated Tenant Participation Officers over the last few years, although we recognise that to make sure the TP is recognised as everyone's job it may require a different approach in the longer term.
- ▶ The number of tenants getting involved in the citywide groups is declining. Over the last five years numbers have fallen from 20 tenants per group to 10 tenants per group.
- ▶ There are very few local tenant groups. With numbers falling from 25 groups approximately to 12 and these are mainly Sheltered Housing Groups.
- ▶ There are very few meaningful tenant consultations. The number of tenants participating in consultations is decreasing. Consultations tend to be done at the last minute, officers who deal with tenants are not informed of consultations, decisions are taken with no consultation, for example, the minimum letting standard and consultations regarding housing improvements are not done effectively and should be improved.
- ▶ The housing volunteers feel their knowledge and expertise is not used effectively by the Council.
- ▶ While there will always be a place for traditional tenant participation, increasing the use of digital methods continues to be adopted, bringing TP into the 21st century.



General Findings

- ▶ Aberdeen City Council has 69.5% satisfaction with the Council's overall service. (These figures were from the 2023 Annual Return on the Charter). From a review of the Scottish Housing Regulator webpage there appears to be a direct link with effective TP and higher rates of tenant satisfaction suggesting we need to strengthen our TP arrangements.
- ▶ The decreasing numbers of tenants engaging with TP suggests that our Tenant Participation structure and officer arrangements should be reviewed.
- ▶ Other Councils' give their tenants a room or TP hub, for example, East Ayrshire to drive participation. There could be considerable value in establishing an accessible and tenant friendly space to drive participation through the use of a hybrid meeting room which can be used out of hours and on weekends.
- ▶ Tenants find the response time frustrating when contacting the Council using the 03000 number.
- ▶ Communication with tenants and the Council needs to be improved. As a group we attend various community events throughout the city. The main complaint is *"we can't contact the Council – waited on the phone for over 45 mins."* Quote from Tenant.
- ▶ As one tenant who continues to be involved in TP for over 25 years said "Within the Tenant Participation structure, non-digital tenants should be taken into consideration. They should be included in the relevant consultations of landlord policies and investment plans as they contribute to the Housing Revenue Account by paying their rent. The Scottish Government and the Scottish Housing Regulator recognise that there are non-digital tenants."

The recommendations made by the Group:

1. The current tenant participation structure and staffing should be reviewed.
2. Continue to explore options for a tenant participation room with hybrid facilities.
3. Utilise the expertise of the Tenant Participation Group as existing policies, leaflets, notices etc are reviewed.
4. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) should have more information regarding the cost of housing improvements and this group should be more involved in the consultation process.
5. Tenant Participation group should be more involved when there are changes to the TP budget and should have a greater say in how this budget is spent.
6. The start up and annual grants of RTOs need to be fairer to represent the demographics of the RTO. (Registered Tenant Organisation).
7. The Group and Officers should explore how tenant participation can be more involved in improving services.
8. The Communication Group must evolve becoming a much more digital group, in addition, to improving traditional methods of engagement.
9. As part of the Tenant Participation review, explore opportunities for Tenant & Resident Forum (TARF) members to have a greater voice.
10. Present the final version of the review to the relevant committee.
11. Contact arrangements should be reviewed to improve the ability of tenants to contact housing.
12. Corporate Landlord to have a calendar showing when housing improvements are to take place in properties.
13. Establish a Housing Communication Plan for the year.
14. Notice Boards in Multi Storeys and Sheltered Housing complexes need to be kept up to date.
15. Improve joined up working with SHMU and ACVO with the area housing teams using these magazines, web pages and radio shows to improve communication with tenants.
16. Work in collaboration with Housing and Support Officers at drop in events to promote area/citywide tenant participation.
17. All staff to promote and support tenants through consultations.
18. A dedicated officer(s) is identified at the start of a service review to consult with the group, attend meetings and keep the group updated with actions and progress.
19. Frontline staff should be included in improvement activity, including reviewing policies and procedures.
20. Explore options to improve tenant participation to ensure it is promoted within the Council and that there is consistent engagement when officers attend meetings with Tenant Groups.
21. Housing & Support Officer and Bon Accord Care staff to set an agenda for monthly meetings and attend.
22. Tenants are to receive a professional service and be given the support they require.
23. Tenant participation activities to be recorded in the Housing System by the Housing and Support Officer with the goal of providing tenant participation indicators.
24. Housing and Support Officers should have access to improved training in tenant participation to achieve better customer engagement and increase customer satisfaction.
25. The Chief Officer of Housing should meet regularly with the Housing Service and Review Group to address issues and provide feedback in an informal setting.

26. The action plan developed by the group and the service should be routinely updated and the group is kept informed of the progress.
27. Performance figures on annual visits by Housing and Support Officer should be provided monthly.
28. Repairs Service should provide monthly performance figures when the new NEC system is in place.
29. Tenant participation should be promoted by Group members developing various short tenant participation videos and displaying them on social media.
30. All Sheltered Housing complexes to be fitted with WI-FI capability in their common rooms.
31. Tenant participation introductory sessions are to be provided at locality events supported by area housing teams.
32. Improve all communication with tenants, listen, consult and feedback to ensure consistency of service across the city no matter where you live.
33. Promote tenant participation on social media.
34. The Communication Group should be involved in suggesting topics for the monthly emails issued to all tenants.
35. Review the name of the Events and Communication Group.
36. Review the name of the Citywide Sheltered Housing Group.



Citywide Groups

All these groups were established in or before 2012 when the first Scottish Social Housing Charter became law, and the new independent Scottish Housing Regulator was established. These groups are all Registered Tenant Organisations and they are registered with the Scottish Government. The City Centre Groups have to evolve to ensure they are still relevant to tenants but also as we move into localities, there is an opportunity to deliver TP differently.

There are currently six citywide groups:

- ▶ **Tenant & Resident Forum** – for tenants who want to be involved at a strategic level.
- ▶ **Housing Service Review Group** – for tenants who want to review Council services.
- ▶ **Housing Performance & Budget Group** – for tenants interested in facts and figures.
- ▶ **Communication & Events Group** – for tenants who want to improve communication and organise/attend events.
- ▶ **Citywide Sheltered Housing Group** – for tenants who want to get involved at a more strategic level with sheltered housing.
- ▶ **Citywide Multi Storey Group** – for tenants who want to get involved at a more strategic level re multi storeys. Now dissolved.

For further information about these groups go to www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/housing/tenant-and-resident-participation.

Tenant & Resident Forum was established to be the top tier of Tenant Participation, but it is not recognised by the Council. The group would like to have a more productive role with senior management.

Housing Service Review Group is the scrutiny group to review and does physical reviews of Council services. This group would like to thank the Council Staff, especially the front-line staff, who participated so openly in these reviews. They explained what worked and what was not working. Many suggested great ideas/suggestions to improve their service to tenants/residents.



Housing Performance & Budget Group is a subgroup of the Housing Service Review Group and provides the facts and figures to the group monthly. The group would like to thank Susan McLeod (Quality Assurance & Performance Manager) and all her staff who have worked with this group for many years. Her enthusiasm and her commitment to involve tenants is appreciated and valued. Currently Hayley Deans (Strategic Performance and Improvement Officer) attends the monthly meeting. The group would like to thank Hayley for continuing to listen to the group and improving the report with the group.

The Housing Revenue Account is discussed at this group as well as the Tenant Participation Budget. We appreciate the work Helen Sheritt (Finance Partner) has tried to do for the group in trying to get information about the HRA.

Communication & Events Group is a group for tenants who want to improve communication. This group is currently involved in helping to produce Newsbite and any leaflets get the customer approved logo. Although members attend various events, we tend to piggyback on to locality events. The use of Facebook has increased due to a tenant taking the lead. There are Facebook pages for Citywide Tenants & Residents, Citywide Sheltered Housing, all mainstream multis, the Clinterty Traveller's site and all new build sites. Certainly, in some multis, this has brought "communities" together, with items like sofas, cots, buggies being offered free in the building. Information and promotional material from Aberdeen City Council, Community Councils, Priority Neighbourhood Groups, Partnerships, Fire Service, Police, and voluntary organisations have been posted.

Citywide Sheltered Housing Group is an award-winning group which was the first group in Scotland to receive a TPAS group award. Previously there was poor consultation and communication with tenants, so this group was established in 2011 and is a strategic group. However, due to poor communication the group started to be for individual issues for tenants and their complex. It was agreed that monthly meetings with Bon Accord Care and Housing & Support would take place monthly, with a poster with monthly dates for the year displayed as agreed with tenants. There is a Sheltered & Amenity Housing Facebook Page to encourage digital engagement.

Citywide Multi Storey Group this group was dissolved this year due to falling numbers but could also be due to better engagement at a local level. Bi-annual resident led inspections are being conducted in all mainstream multis. Various drop-in sessions are taking place by Housing & Support Officers and their tenants. All these Multi Storeys have their own Facebook pages.

Tenants Survey

During the second half of 2023, group members conducted a survey at various events and online about Tenant Participation.

Three questions were asked:

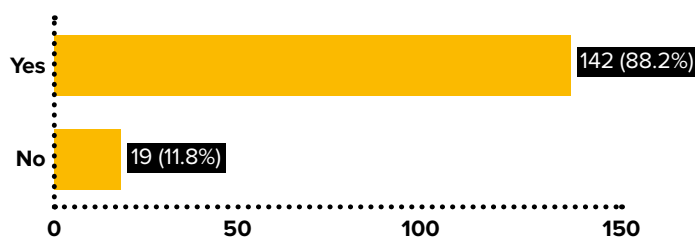
- ▶ Are you a tenant of Aberdeen City Council?
- ▶ Have you heard about Tenant Participation?
- ▶ Would you be willing to come to an introductory session about Tenant Participation?

Although disappointing, it is not surprising to see that half of the tenants have not heard about tenant participation. This fits in with the Tenant Satisfaction results of 2021. This was the first-time tenants had used an online portal as well as paper.

Tenant Participation Survey Results

Are you a tenant of Aberdeen City Council?

161 responses

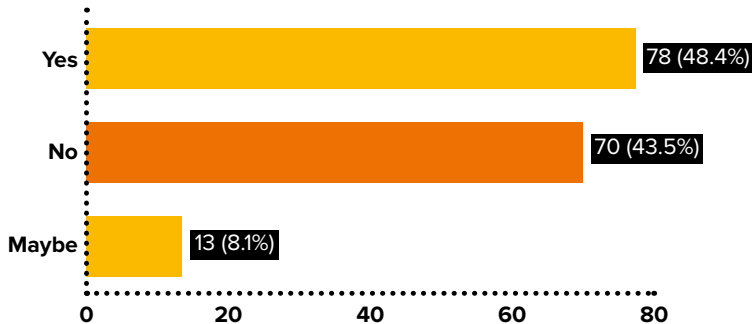


Have you heard about tenant participation?

For more information please visit:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/housing/tenant-and-resident-participation

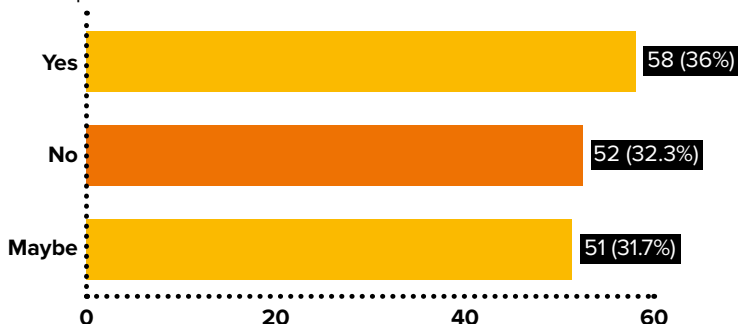
161 responses



Would you be interested in coming to an introductory session about Tenant Participation?

This is to give you a better understanding of the groups without feeling overwhelmed at a meeting.

161 responses



Interviews with Staff

Senior Housing & Support Officers and Housing Support Officers were interviewed by group members in various locations and the following questions were asked to all officers.

1. **How does Tenant Participation impact your role?**
2. **Did you receive any training on TP?**
3. **Do you think the tenants reviewing services benefits ACC and tenants?**
4. **Do you think community-based TP would be more effective than citywide group?**
5. **Do you think that we as a council (ACC) provide good customer service?**
6. **What would improve staff engagement with tenants?**

The findings were that although Tenant Participation did impact on their role, it was not seen as a priority. The need to get more tenants involved was noted but there are no records of TP records being kept.

- ▶ The majority had received one off training but didn't have access to on-going training in TP.
- ▶ Tenants reviewing services was seen as positive as they use the services – but the Housing Staff interviewed felt that communication with our tenants was poor as there should be a two way conversation with tenants rather than the Council telling them this is the way it is.

- ▶ Community Based Tenant Participation would be beneficial to the housing teams, but citywide groups are important as well. Some staff liked the idea of the Multi Storey clusters – saw the benefits but some staff were concerned there would be too many tenants.

Staff interviewed felt that there would be better engagement with their tenants by the following being encouraged:

- ▶ An understanding of the role of the Housing & Support Officer by tenants.
- ▶ H&SOs being more involved in what a tenant in rent arrears has to pay back as they know their vulnerable tenants.
- ▶ Better communication with tenants.
- ▶ Being able to receive a better service from the Contact Centre and when they enter a Council building.
- ▶ More Tenant & Resident Groups.
- ▶ More TP Training.
- ▶ Building a rapport with your tenants from the beginning.
- ▶ A consistent non judgmental approach for all tenants from all Housing Teams.

Acronyms

ACVO Aberdeen Council of voluntary organisations.

SHMU Station House Media Unit

TPAS Tenant Participation Advisory Services

TP Tenant Participation.

Appendix 4: A Review Tenant & Resident Participation Action Plan

Housing Service Review – Action Plan

Recommendation		Action	Responsible Team	Aberdeen City Council Response
Tenant Participation Review				
1	The current tenant participation structure and staffing should be reviewed.	Tenant participation structure to be reviewed.	Housing Strategy	Review of tenant participation is ongoing. Recommendations from this review will form part of the review.
2	Continue to explore options for a tenant participation room with hybrid facilities.	Continue to explore options and assess budget implications.	Housing Strategy	Explore feasibility of recommendation.
3	Utilise the expertise of the Tenant Participation Group as existing policies, leaflets, notices etc are reviewed.	Inform relevant services/ teams of the recommendation and include as an agenda item for discussion at relevant tenant group.	Housing Strategy	Housing Strategy to send all policies for review to Tenants and Residents Forum.
4	The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) should have more information regarding the cost of housing improvements and this group should be more involved in the consultation process.	The HRA Business Plan is currently being reviewed and will be shared with the tenant group.	Finance Partner	Share HRA Business Plan as part of each update.

5	Tenant Participation group should be more involved when there are changes to the TP budget and should have a greater say in how this budget is spent.	Consultation with the Tenant Group should be ongoing and when there are changes to this budget.	Finance Partner	Share HRA Business Plan as part of each update.
6	The start up and annual grants of RTOs need to be fairer to represent the demographics of the RTO. (Registered Tenant Organisation).	Proposal to be developed with tenants for approval at Senior Management Team.	Housing Strategy	Proposal to be developed for consideration by April 2025.
7	The Group and Officers should explore how tenant participation can be more involved in improving services.	Discuss with tenants what they would like to be involved in.	Housing Strategy	Discussion to form part of an agenda at a future meeting.
8	The Communication Group must evolve becoming a much more digital group, in addition, to improving traditional methods of engagement.	A Communications Business Advisor is to attend the Communication Group meetings to offer advice.	Housing Strategy & Business Advisor	Business Advisor attends monthly meetings.
9	As part of the Tenant Participation review, explore opportunities for Tenant & Resident Forum (TARF) members to have a greater voice.	Consideration should also be given to other ways tenants can be involved.	Housing Strategy	Opportunities to be explored and considered.
10	Present the final version of the review to the relevant committee.	Present the final version of the review to Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.	Housing Strategy	The Council recognises the value of the Housing Service Review Group and will present the review to committee.

Communication with Tenants

11	Contact arrangements should be reviewed to improve the ability of tenants to contact housing.	Invite Customer Service Manager to the tenant participation groups to explore options.	Customer Service	Customer Service Manager to be contacted to arrange a meeting.
12	Corporate Landlord to have a calendar showing when housing improvements are to take place in properties.	New asset management model is under development, and this will be included.	Corporate Landlord	Include recommendation as an action.
13	Establish a Housing Communication Plan for the year.	To include Rent Consultation, Tenant Satisfaction Survey etc.	Housing Strategy	Communication Plan to be developed.
14	Notice Boards in Multi Storeys and Sheltered Housing complexes need to be kept up to date.	To be included in the resident led inspections, drop ins and monthly sheltered housing meetings.	Locality Inclusion Manager	Assess feasibility of tenants being provided a key to notice boards.

Tenant Participation Events				
15	Improve joined up working with SHMU and ACVO with the area housing teams using these magazines, web pages and radio shows to improve communication with tenants.	Regular meetings to take place with ACVO and SHMU.	Housing Strategy and Locality Inclusion Manager	Regular meetings to be scheduled to improve communication.
16	Work in collaboration with Housing and Support Officers at drop in events to promote area/citywide tenant participation.	Improve collaboration with Housing and Support Officers and tenant participation groups.	Locality Inclusion Manager	Regular meetings to be scheduled to improve communication.
17	All staff to promote and support tenants through consultations.	Senior Management Team to lead on this approach.	Locality Inclusion Manager	Staff to provide further support to tenants with consultations.

Staff Development

18	A dedicated officer(s) is identified at the start of a service review to consult with the group, attend meetings and keep the group updated with actions and progress.	Senior Management Team to lead on this approach.	Housing Strategy and Locality Inclusion Manager	Staff to engage more with tenants on reviews of service.
19	Frontline staff should be included in improvement activity, including reviewing policies and procedures.	Frontline staff are included in improvement activity.	Housing Strategy	Frontline staff are currently involved in improvement activity and this will be further strengthened.
20	Explore options to improve tenant participation to ensure it is promoted within the Council and that there is consistent engagement when officers attend meetings with Tenant Groups.	When invitation is sent out, information about the group and what to expect at the meeting will be provided.	Housing Strategy	Further information to be sent to those who attend the tenant participation groups will be issued.
21	Housing & Support Officer and Bon Accord Care staff to set an agenda for monthly meetings and attend.	Joint agenda to be set and issued.	Locality Inclusion Manager	Agenda also to be displayed on the notice board.

22	Tenants are to receive a professional service and be given the support they require.	Housing and Support Officer induction to show the importance of effective tenant participation and customer satisfaction.	Locality Inclusion Manager	Induction to be amended.
23	Tenant participation activities to be recorded in the Housing System by the Housing and Support Officer with the goal of providing tenant participation indicators.	Assess the feasibility of recording this information on the Housing System.	Locality Inclusion Manager	Feasibility of this action to be assessed.
24	Housing and Support Officers should have access to improved training in tenant participation to achieve better customer engagement and increase customer satisfaction.	Assess the feasibility and cost of this action.	Locality Improvement Manager	Feasibility of this action to be assessed.

Improving Tenant Participation Engagement

25	The Chief Officer of Housing should meet regularly with the Housing Service and Review Group to address issues and provide feedback in an informal setting.	Meetings to be scheduled on a quarterly basis.	Housing Strategy	Quarterly meetings have been scheduled.
26	The action plan developed by the group and the service should be routinely updated and the group is kept informed of the progress.	Action Plan to be shared at meetings on a quarterly basis.	Housing Strategy	Quarterly update to be provided to the group to monitor progress against the actions.
27	Performance figures on annual visits by Housing and Support Officer should be provided monthly.	Assess the feasibility of sharing this information.	Locality Improvement Manager	Establish if Housing System can provide this information.
28	Repairs Service should provide monthly performance figures when the new NEC system is in place.	Figures will be provided when the housing system is in place.	Corporate Landlord	Performance figures will be provided.
29	Tenant participation should be promoted by Group members developing various short tenant participation videos and displaying them on social media.	Promote tenant participation.	Housing Strategy	Further tenant participation will be supported.
30	All Sheltered Housing complexes to be fitted with WI-FI capability in their common rooms.	Assess the feasibility and costs associated with this.	Corporate Landlord	Feasibility and costs to be developed.

31	Tenant participation introductory sessions are to be provided at locality events supported by area housing teams.	Assess different options available to improve communication.	Locality Improvement Manager	Develop a Communication Plan to improve tenant participation.
32	Improve all communication with tenants, listen, consult and feedback to ensure consistency of service across the city no matter where you live.	Assess different options available to improve communication.	Housing Strategy	Develop a Communication Plan to improve communication.
33	Promote tenant participation on social media.	Tenant participation to be further promoted.	Housing Strategy and Corporate Communications Team	Tenant participation is promoted through social media. Explore options for further improvement.
34	The Communication Group should be involved in suggesting topics for the monthly emails issued to all tenants.	Include in meeting agenda for suggestions.	Housing Strategy	To be taken forward in monthly meetings.

Internal TP Review

35	Review the name of the Events and Communication Group	Review the name of the group	Housing Strategy	Name reviewed with the group and changed to Communication Group
36	Review the name of the Citywide Sheltered Housing Group	Review the name of the group	Housing Strategy	Name reviewed with the group and changed to Citywide Sheltered & Amenity Housing Group.



SAVE TIME

HOUSING ONLINE

The Housing Service Review Group would like to thank the Council for working with Tenants and Residents to improve our Housing Online Experience.

They have made a number of changes to the portal, and have listened to what the customers said. It is now so much easier and simpler to use.

Tenants and residents are now able to:

- ▶ **Access Your Rent Account**
- ▶ **Update your contact details**
- ▶ **Give your notice to terminate your tenancy**


And so much more – why not go to **Housing Online** to discover this new experience.



We are always looking for new members to join our award winning **HOUSING SERVICE REVIEW GROUP – please think about it. Look forward to meeting you!**

Contact **Carol Hannaford** @ channaford@aberdeencity.gov.uk



	ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL	
	ELECTRICAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES	
	ARRANGED ACCESS PROCEDURE	
	ACC-EMP-1	

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) is a formal document that is produced following an assessment of the electrical installations within a property. The requirements for electrical safety checks are highlighted in the Housing (Scotland) Act. Further statutory guidance was introduced in December 2015 in private rented properties with later roll-out to social housing. The purpose of an EICR is to ensure that the electrical systems are safe for continued use and to identify any potential hazards that need to be addressed.

An EICR involves a thorough inspection and testing of the electrical installations in a property. This includes visual inspections of all electrical accessories, testing of distribution equipment and earthing, de-energized testing, re-energized testing, and functional testing. The process requires access to various electrical components throughout the property, and any identified issues must be rectified to ensure safety.


The legal requirements for EICR are as follows:

1. **Mandatory EICR Every 5 Years:** Landlords must ensure their properties have a valid EICR conducted every 5 years by a qualified electrician.
2. **Provide EICR to Tenants:** Landlords must provide a copy of the EICR to tenants within 28 days of the inspection.
3. **Compliance with National Standards:** The electrical installations must meet national standards for electrical safety, as set out in the 18th edition of the Wiring Regulations (British Standard 7671).
4. **Remedial Work:** If the EICR identifies any issues, landlords must carry out remedial work to make the electrical installation safe


All EICR checks to be planned 4 years 9 months from the previous check date. The Electrical Contractor is to make three access attempts via lettered appointment before a property can be passed back to ACC for addition to the Arranged Access program. The property must be returned to ACC with a minimum of 4 weeks left on the current certificate.

Process:

- a) Following 3 failed access attempts by the Electrical Contractor via lettered appointment to complete the EICR check properties are passed back to ACC on the Hard No Access (HNA) daily update to be added to the Arranged Access program. The update also includes removals of properties on the Arranged Access program that are now complete whether that be due to Arranged Access, appointment request from the tenant, void request or new installation.
- b) Following receipt of the HNA update each property received is checked for new installations (which the Electrical Contractor may not have been made aware of yet) and the tenancy status of the property e.g. is it a new void/pending void/void for extensive period? Once these checks have been completed any properties identified as void/installs complete are highlighted to the Electrical Contractor.

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	ELECTRICAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES	
	ARRANGED ACCESS PROCEDURE	
	ACC-EMP-1	

- c) When paperwork is being generated for a property being planned for Arranged Access, the tenancy status and new installation status are rechecked in case any changes have taken place between receipt of the property and planning. Properties are planned in batches of a maximum of 15 properties a day Tuesday – Thursday, Monday and Fridays can be used if there is an extensive number of properties on the Arranged Access program to ensure certificate dates are not lost.
- d) When a property is planned for Arranged Access the tenant is notified with an Arranged Access Notice which is hand delivered by an ACC Inspector. The Arranged Access date is a minimum of 5 working days after delivery, however, we are only required to give 24 hours notice in writing as per Section 27 and Schedule 4, Para. 4 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 to take entry.
- e) The Arranged Access Notice details the Electrical Contractor has been attempting to gain access to complete the EICR check, the planned Arranged Access date, contact information for Electrical Contractor and an overview of what steps will be taken should there be no access via appointment prior to the Arranged Access date. Tenants have until 12pm the day before the Arranged Access date to get the service/safety check completed to avoid the Arranged Access being attended.
- f) Following confirmation from the Electrical Contractor, the day before the Arranged Access date, that the EICR check has not been completed, a job number will be raised on the ACC system. The job raised is for the Arranged Access to take place with a tenant charge budget code against the job for an attended Arranged Access (charge of £120). Tenants are made aware of the charge for an Arranged Access being attended when canvased with the Arranged Access Notice and that it will stand whether they are there on the day to give access or not.
- g) Prior to the job number being generated the tenancy status and new installation status are rechecked.
- h) Order of properties and job numbers are provided to Electrical Contractor after 12pm the day prior to the Arranged Access date for outstanding properties.
- i) On the day of the Arranged Access an ACC inspector attends the property with an engineer from Electrical Contractor and Locksmith to change the locks if required.
- j) The tenant is given the opportunity to allow access on the day of Arranged Access, should there be no access the property lock is opened for access to complete the EICR check. Once the check has been carried out, the property is re-secured, and keys returned to ACC depot for collection by named tenant.
- k) Completed paperwork for properties attended for Arranged Access is completed by ACC Inspector and returned to Work Planner for processing. ACC Arranged Access program is updated to remove the completed properties and completed paperwork sent to Housing for their records.

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	ELECTRICAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES	
	ARRANGED ACCESS PROCEDURE	
	ACC-EMP-1	

Note:

- Should there be refused access on the day, or another obstruction of access e.g. dog in property, and no access via tenant, the property is to be re-planned and Housing contacted for assistance. Housing may then request assistance from the dog warden, the Police or contact the tenant/attend next Arranged Access as joint visit depending on issue highlighted/previous dealings with tenant.

DRAFT

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Housing Services Approach to Quality Improvement

April 2025

Rationale

Aberdeen City Council aims to ensure that “*The people of Aberdeen live in good quality, safe, sustainable and affordable homes in thriving communities that meet their needs*” as expressed within the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy 2025- 2030. As a cluster we are constantly striving to learn and develop to better meet this vision.

This Quality Improvement Framework embeds the regulatory requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and the Care Inspectorate (CI) but expands on that to encompass our wider ambition. It exemplifies the standards we want to see in all housing services and helps guide self-evaluation at team and cluster level. It also provides clarity of expectations for everyone involved and a more focussed list of priorities to help accelerate progress. This Quality Improvement Framework will continue to be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

Purpose

This framework is intended to achieve the following outcomes:

- Ensure a broad understanding across all staff of the relevant regulatory frameworks and how these impact their work.
- Make the compilation of returns to external regulators and internal committees easier, more efficient, and more rigorous and robust
- Ensure that there is a clear set of priorities for the service each year, and that these take account of business-as-usual activity.
- Allow robust evaluation of the impact of improvement initiatives and projects allowing for better decision making
- Provide a clear timetable of quality assurance activity to allow for better planning and preparation, and efficient gathering of relevant evidence
- Ensure that everyone involved is clear about their responsibilities and accountabilities for quality control, and quality assurance and improvement.

What's in it for me?

- Fewer last-minute requests for information due to better planning of what is required by regulators and when.
- Better recognition of what good work we are doing due to recognising our impact on people's lives as well as trends in numbers.
- A systematic way to improve the service and ensuring that time and resource is allocated to do it well.

The Regulatory Frameworks

Aberdeen City Council's Housing cluster must comply with relevant regulatory frameworks and also conduct a self-evaluation against these and report to the relevant regulator each year. More detail of each regulatory framework referred to above is covered in the annexes below as follows:

- Scottish Housing Regulator – Annual Assurance Statement and Annual Return on the Charter: [Annex C](#).
- Care Inspectorate Regulatory Framework: [Annex D](#).

It is also thought prudent to consider the new standards for social housing landlords in England, developed in response to Grenfell and the Awab Ishaq cases as they may be adopted in Scotland in due course.

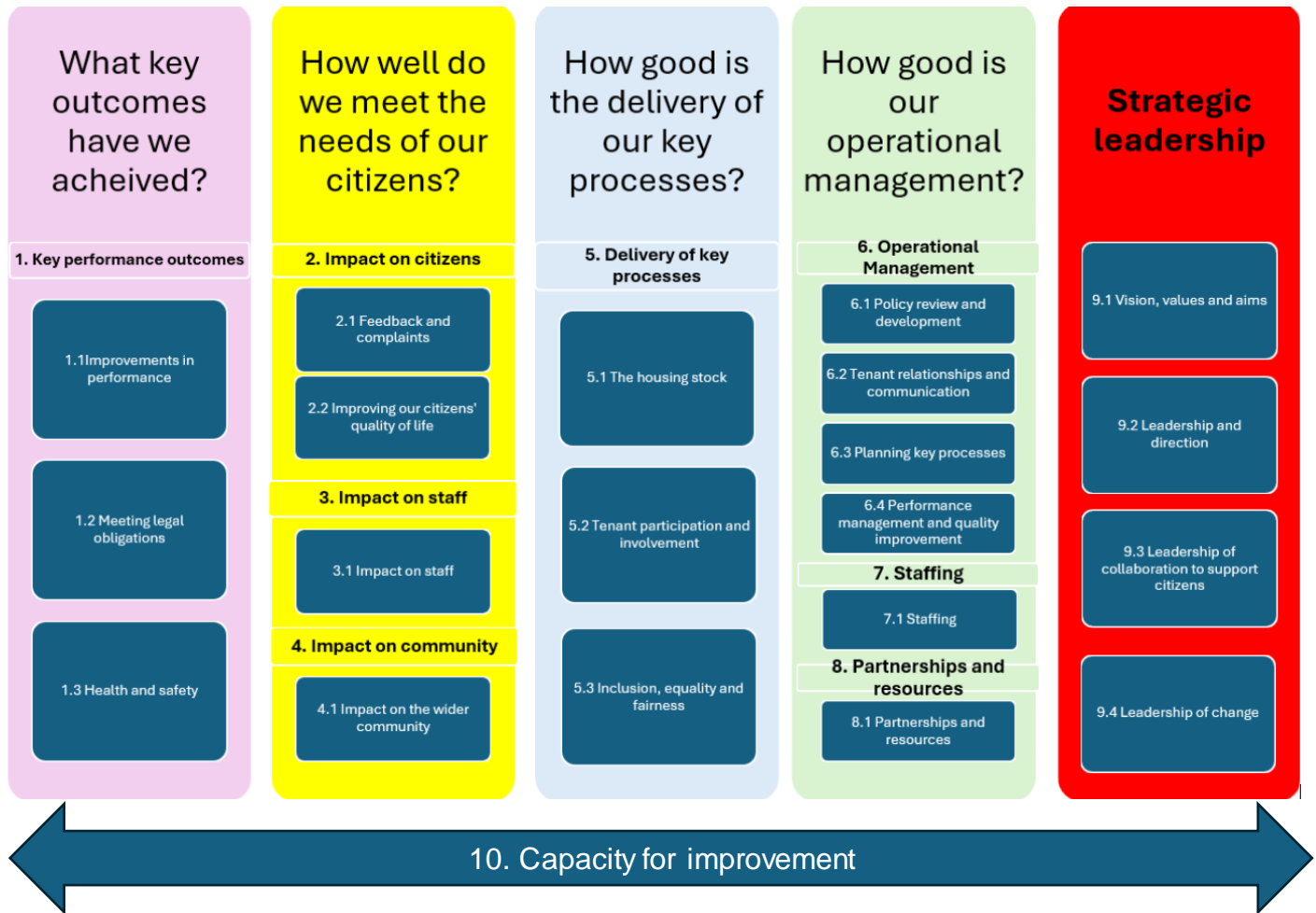
- Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) – Regulatory Standards in England (for information): [Annex E](#).

The Scottish Housing Regulator Annual Return on the Charter

In addition, the Scottish Federation of Housing Association's (SFHA - [The voice of Scotland's housing associations. | SFHA](#)) has prepared a toolkit to assist in completing a self-evaluation to support the preparation of the Annual Assurance Statement and that has been considered in the preparation of this quality framework.

The Self-evaluation Framework for Aberdeen City Council

The diagram below is an overall quality framework that incorporates regulatory requirements, and some other important aspects of quality. It is not intended that all of the framework is used all of the time. Rather it is a reference point that can be explored over time. However, the relevant regulatory frameworks are mapped into the framework below, as explained in [Annex B](#).



Using this Self-evaluation Framework

Housing’s Senior Management Team (SMT) will conduct a strategic self-evaluation against the framework above over the course of each year. This could be done in blocks, for example development days, or regularly at SMT meetings. In year one this will also look to identify gaps in the evidence base required to answer the reflective questions against each standard. Any gaps can be filled by adapting existing information gathering mechanisms or developing something new e.g. adapting the tenant survey questions. Doing this self-evaluation will also ensure that regulatory requirements are met, and the service is completing necessary assurance statements for senior management, elected members and relevant regulators. Everyone in the service has a responsibility to help evaluate quality and gather evidence (See Roles and Responsibilities below.).



Self-evaluation asks three related questions:

The self-evaluation toolkit in [Annex A](#) details an approach to self-evaluating against the framework above. It uses reflective questions and considers what evidence should be considered to come to a judgment on performance. Not all sections are directly relevant to regulatory requirements. However, the framework overall provides a holistic overview of the services performance, and regulatory requirements are clearly marked in each section.

Roles and Responsibilities in a Quality Calendar

A number of teams and individuals hold complimentary responsibilities for meeting regulatory requirements and for securing improvement. It is important that everyone understands and is held to account for their contribution in realising this improvement. In the first instance there is evidence to be gathered and analysed that will allow an assessment to be made about how effective the service is against the regulatory requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator and Care Inspectorate. This then has to be collated and presented to relevant bodies such as council and the relevant regulator.

The table below captures these reporting requirements for 2025/26, their deadlines and who is responsible for what. This should allow for improved planning as individual staff can reserve time in their diaries knowing that they will have some action to complete by a set deadline. This calendar will be reviewed annually.

	Statutory Returns			Committee Reports				Consultations		HRA		Strategy			
Month	SHR Annual Return on the Charter	SHR Annual Assurance Statement	Care Inspectorate Annual Return	Housing Board Bi-Annual Report	Performance Reporting Report	Affordable Housing Update Report	Empty Homes Update Report	Tenant Satisfaction Survey	Rent Consultation	HRA Business Plan	HRA Budget	SHIP	Housing Need and Demand Assessment (26/27)	LHS 2025-2030	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP)
Holidays															
April	End of year data analysis and collation (Data and Insights) Finalise narrative (SMT)			SMT comment on draft Director Deadline	Draft report (SMT) Director deadline for paper	Get data from RSLs for year-end completions (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Get data from Housing Strategy Team (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Develop Proposals for TSS (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)			Prepare HRA Budget Protocol (Finance)	Collate intelligence from RSLs for year-end carry forward (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Work to begin on HNDA 4. Programme to be mapped out with A'shire Council	Public / Stakeholder consultation	
May 27 May CHPP	Sign off by Housing Board (Chief Officer) Submission deadline to SHR (Chief Officer)	Collation & Analysis of data (Data and Insights) Draft statement & collate supporting evidence (Senior Housing		Housing Board meets to consider report Report to CHPP Committee	For approval at CHPP Committee (Chief Officer)	For approval at CHPP (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)		Issue ITQ (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)				Finalise data from RSLs (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)		Public / Stakeholder consultation	

		Strategy Officer) Review & refine statement & supporting evidence (SMT)													
June		Draft report finalised (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)			Data provided (Data and Insights) Update dashboard (SMT) Draft report (SMT)			Commission Tenant Satisfaction Survey (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Analysis to inform rent consultation proposals (Senior Housing Strategy Officer & Finance)			Draft Report (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)		Draft report & final LHS for approval (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	
July		Director deadline			Director deadline							Director deadline		Director deadline	
August 20 Council 26 CHPP		For approval at CHPP (Chief Officer)			For approval at CHPP Committee (Chief Officer)		For approval at CHPP (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Tenant Satisfaction Survey Fieldwork (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Develop rent consultation proposals (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)					For approval at CHPP (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	
September		Prepare & publish an accessible version for tenants (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)		Draft report (Executive Director) Comment on draft (SMT)	Data provided (Data & Insights) Update dashboard (SMT) Draft report (SMT)			Tenant Satisfaction Survey Fieldwork & Analysis (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)				For approval at CHPP Committee (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)			
October 01 Council		SHR submission deadline (Chief Officer)		Director deadline	Director deadline			Results to inform IIA for rent consultation	Launch tenant Rent Consultation (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)	Submit to Council (Finance)	Tenant Rent Consultation (Senior Strategy Officer)	SHIP to Scottish Government (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)			Submission to SG (Housing Access & Support Manager)
November 11 CHPP				Housing Board meets to consider report to CHPP	For approval at CHPP (Chief Officer)				Analyse returns (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)		Draft paper (Finance, with input from Housing				

											& Corporate Landlord)				
December									Report to council as part of HRA budget proposal		Report to council as part of HRA budget proposal				
January			Submission opens (Service Standards Officer / Housing Access & Support Manager)		Data provided (Data & Insights) Update dashboard (SMT)										
February	Commence data analysis and narrative (Senior Housing Strategy Officer)		Submission date (Housing Access & Support Manager)		Draft report (Chief Officer) Director deadline										
March 11 CHPP	Refine & further develop narrative (SMT)			Draft report (Exec. Director)	For approval at CHPP (Chief Officer) Data provided (Data & Insights) Update dashboard (SMT)						Report to full council				

Improvement Priorities

The number of improvement priorities should be manageable and achievable. It is far better to under-promise and over-deliver here than the reverse. It is important that all improvement initiatives are identified, planned, conducted, and evaluated in a systematic way. This is to ensure that they are coherent, managed in terms of resource and staff time, evaluated rigorously and actions taken as a result of that evaluation. Improvement activities are, of course, at different scales and so will require differing levels of preparation, monitoring, and evaluation.

It is also important that the service holds all of its improvement activities in one place within a Housing Improvement Plan so that they can be overseen by the SMT. Improvement actions in individual teams and establishments should align with this plan, and feed progress information into it.

To ensure that this is the case, all large scale and strategic improvement activities will follow the Council's Improvement Charter Format with progress being reported to the Housing Board.

For smaller scale and local improvement projects, they should complete the shorter template below and be monitored by the Housing SMT through regular updates to the Housing Improvement Plan.

To bring all housing business priorities and improvement work together, we will use a single plan which will be monitored by SMT and the Housing Board. Leads for each piece of work will update progress at regular intervals.

There are three main kinds of work in any work plan.

- Business as usual – all the work that needs to be done to deliver the service
- Business priorities – urgent actions that are either mandated by others or are regular review work such as reviewing policies. They lead to improvement, but they are not designed with the intention of changing the way we do things.
- Improvement priorities – a small list of things that are designed to review, test and lead to improvement. They will follow the templates above and be monitored and evaluated. Progress against these will be overseen by the Housing Board.

All improvement projects need to be evaluated. We need to know if they are successful and should be rolled out more widely. Or if they were not and we should take a different approach. Being systematic about this ensures that we learn and improve.

Projects will evaluate themselves either once a year or at the end of the project, whichever comes sooner, using an agreed proforma that will be submitted to SMT.

The following improvement priorities have been identified for 2025/26 and we will continue to review and refine them in light of our continuing self-evaluation activity.

1. Develop a service-wide approach to vulnerabilities

To progress this in 2025/26 we will:

- Trial new ways of working to identify the best approach to registered housing support.
- Implement a systematic approach to annual visits.

2. Develop and embed a positive culture throughout the service

To progress this in 2025/26 we will:

- Implement a housing management structure, subject to approval of the business case, and review service delivery models across key operational areas.
- Develop the role of SMT to lead and direct the service
 - Review and improve approach to communication to ensure consistency in messaging
 - Develop a comprehensive understanding of roles, accountabilities, and relationships across the cluster, ensuring the contribution of individuals and teams in the delivery of the overall service.
 - Undertake self-evaluation activity against the framework and monitor improvement and business priorities

3. Work to reduce number of voids to below the Scottish average (long term aim)

To progress this in 2025/26 we will:

- Implement a structured approach to examining relevant data and identifying and implementing associated improvement activity
- Continue to collaborate with Corporate Landlord and Capital clusters to better understand and agree shared priorities

4. Work to reduce rent arrears to the Scottish average in the longer term (9.5% currently)

To progress this in 2025/26 we will:

- Evaluate the test of change on small balances
- Maximise uptake of direct debits at tenancy sign up stage
- Continue to analyse the data to identify further improvement activity

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SMT schedule will incorporate examination of business as usual, improvement priorities, business priorities, draft reports, and data, urgent or unplanned matters. To achieve this, SMT meetings will be split into agenda items that are business oriented and items that are more developmental. The SMT will plan their meetings to incorporate the following items to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of progress.

1. Using the Quality Calendar to plan when papers are coming to SMT for discussion
2. Using the Quality Calendar to schedule the self-evaluation cycle against the framework
3. Monitoring the business priority and improvement plan to schedule regular updates and discussion on progress



Annex A

Aberdeen City Council Housing Services

Self-evaluation Toolkit

April 2025

Annex A: Self Evaluation Toolkit

Introduction

The service will conduct self-evaluation against all of the framework below over the course of each year. This could be done in chunks, for example during team development days, or regularly over time such as at SMT meetings.

The structure below follows the overall self-evaluation framework for Housing Services in ACC. Each quality indicator clearly states whether it is directly relevant to the requirements of a regulator or not. It should be noted that even areas that are not directly related to the requirements of a regulator are still important in giving an overall impression of how well the service is performing. Regulators will also be interested in this overall approach to quality, especially the Care Inspectorate.

Each quality indicator identifies potential sources of evidence that should be considered. These should be added to over time as new sources are identified or existing sources adapted and modified.

Each also has a list of possible reflective questions. These can be used at all levels and are an aid to discussion and reflection. They are not intended as a checklist. The idea is to try and form an overall view of strengths and weaknesses, and then consider what actions are required as a result.

There are indicators (e.g. 1.3, 5.1) that include reflective questions specific to the services provided by Corporate Landlord. These have been included as they form part of the overall regulatory framework monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The format lends itself to a workshop approach.

Key Area: What outcomes have we achieved?

Quality indicator 1.1: Improvements in performance

This is about how well the service is performing against key numerical measures such as KPIs

This directly relates to CH3 and CH4 from the SHR regulatory framework

Sources of evidence

- Annual charter report to tenants
- Feedback on Charter report
- Record of consideration of SHR annual assurance statement by CHPP committee
- Any agreed improvement plan
- Care Inspectorate annual return
- SHR ARC submission
- Tenant survey results
- Housing Board Power BI
- Housing Managers Dashboard
- RRTP Dashboard
- Referral support outcomes
- SVQ and CI registration data

Reflective questions

- Are we receiving the right data and how are we interrogating it and responding to it? What is missing?
- Do our staff understand what the data is telling us and its importance to their work?
- Are we clear about our performance highlights and challenges?
- Are we assured that our reports include comparisons with, for example, an appropriate range of other landlords as well as the national average?

- Have we included comparisons between our current performance and our performance in previous years?
- Have we agreed with tenants and service users how these comparisons should be presented and explained?
- Do our reports clearly explain any factors that have influenced our performance (positively and/or negatively)?
- Do our reports explain clearly how we will address any areas for improvement? Are we assured that areas for improvement and appropriate actions have been discussed with our tenant scrutineers?
- How have we responded to the performance report? How have we prioritised action as a result? Are we assured that we have effective ways of ensuring that intended improvements are delivered and that commitments to tenants and service users are met?
- Are we assured that tenants and service users are able to comment on our report easily?
- How are we responding to feedback from elected members on the annual assurance statement and report?

Quality Indicator 1.2: Meeting legal obligations

This is about how well the service is meeting its legal obligations

This directly relates to AN1-3, and CH1 from the SHR regulatory framework

Sources of evidence

- Previous Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) and action plan relating to improvements
- Self-assurance assessment/ evidence bank/supporting narrative and documentation
- Notes of Housing Board and CHPP committee discussion
- Action plans to support preparation of current AAS
- Notes of discussions/ consultation with tenants
- Record of governing body/committee consideration of compliance and approval of AAS
- Most recent Annual Assurance Statement
- Reports to Housing Board and CHPP Committee
- Internal audit reports
- Reports from specialist advisers
- External validation assessments

- ARC submission
- Charter performance reports to Housing Board and CHPP committee

Reflective questions

- Has the CHPP committee been involved effectively in assessing compliance with the Regulatory Framework?
- Have we gathered and reviewed sufficient evidence to provide us with appropriate assurance of our compliance prior to signing off our assurance statement?
- Have we gathered and reviewed sufficient evidence to enable us to confirm, if required, specific assurance in any areas identified by the SHR?
- How well are we performing against our statutory duties for people experiencing homelessness?
- Have we identified any areas of material non-compliance? If so, have we agreed a realistic and deliverable compliance plan? Have we agreed how implementation will be monitored? Have we notified the SHR?
- Have we identified any areas of non-compliance that are not material? How have we satisfied ourselves the failure is not material? Have we obtained assurance about how the weakness will be resolved? How will that be monitored?
- Have we identified improvement actions? Are we clear about the intended benefits/outcomes from improvement? Have we agreed how delivery will be monitored, measured, and reported?
- Is our Annual Assurance Statement available to tenants and other service users? Is it published on our website?
- Have we communicated with tenants about the content of the AAS?
- Do we have effective arrangements for monitoring the implementation of compliance and improvement actions? Do we refer to these when reporting to tenants and when starting to prepare the subsequent AAS?
- How do we monitor ongoing compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Framework?
- Do we have systems/processes in place to identify any material change? How do we test these systems?
- Are we assured that any changes in compliance will be communicated to the SHR (and other regulators as required), relevant stakeholders, including lenders and tenants?
- Have we completed our 10% sampling of safety certification for landlords that apply for the first time or renew a registration?
- Are we confident that we have an appropriate understanding of the legal requirements associated with our duties as a social landlord?
- Do we have effective arrangements to ensure that our knowledge is kept up-to-date effectively? What systems do we have in place to ensure we are aware of changes in legislation?
- Do our policies refer to relevant legislation and the associated requirements?

- Do we consider legal implications under each CHPP committee report?
- Do we consider equality and human rights impacts under each relevant committee report?
- Have we implemented a 'lessons learned' approach to monitoring our performance?
- How do we assure ourselves that our allocations policy and practice are compliant with the law and good practice? How do we gain assurance about the effective implementation of the allocations policy?
- Are we developing processes to ensure that our allocations policy is informed by the data we collect about equalities?
- How do we assure ourselves that ASB is being tackled effectively and that our legal responsibilities are being met?
- How are we assured that we always act within the law? Do we make appropriate use of specialist legal advice?
- How do we gain assurance that our abandonment policy is compliant with the law? How do we oversee its effective implementation?
- How do we maintain assurance that our tenancy agreements comply with legislative requirements?
- How do we assure ourselves that we are meeting our legal obligations to people who are homeless?
- Do we receive information about any breaches of the 2017 Order in respect of our use of unsuitable temporary accommodation?
- Do we use that information effectively to improve service delivery?
- Are we assured that we meet our legal duties to assess the need for and ensure the provision of support to homeless people effectively? How do we gain that assurance? Are we assured that we are meeting our public sector equality duty in discharging our duties to people who are homeless?
- Do we have ongoing engagement to help influence the implementation of Rapid Re-housing Plans in our area(s) of operation?
- How do we assure ourselves that the required statistical returns are made on time to the Scottish Government?
- How do we gain assurance that we are complying with our obligations in respect of data protection and Freedom of Information?
- Do we use internal audit effectively to provide assurance?
- Did we submit our Annual Return on the Charter by the end of May this year?
- How are we assured that our systems and processes ensure the reliability of the data collected and submitted?
- Did the CHPP committee review the ARC data effectively in advance of it being submitted?
- Does the committee get regular reports on our performance against the Charter?
- Are we assured that we are fully compliant with the requirements of the Charter? If not, is an effective Action Plan being implemented successfully and are we engaging with our tenants about this?

Quality indicator 1.3: Health and Safety

This is about specific obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act and related advice and guidance.

This directly relates to AN4 from the SHR regulatory framework

Sources of evidence

- Stock condition survey
- Asset Management Plan
- Examples of responses to health and safety incidents

Reflective questions

- Have we successfully restored full compliance relating to tenant and resident safety? Are we monitoring progress/performance effectively?
- Are we satisfied that we are adopting a risk-based approach to resolving identified areas of non-compliance (e.g. EICRs) and that risks are being monitored and managed effectively?
- How are we notified about any investigations being carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)?
- Are there any cases being investigated currently by the HSE relating to the safety of our tenants and/or residents?
- If there are (or have been during the last year), how are we assured that we are co-operating with the HSE? What evidence do we have that we are engaging effectively with affected tenants/residents (and their families if relevant)? Have we notified the SHR? How will/did we consider the report from the investigation?
- Have we considered any reports by any regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance provider relating to safety concerns in or around any of our properties in the last year? How are we notified about any such reports/ investigations? How are we assured that any recommendations are/have been implemented effectively?
- Are we assured that there is an effective approach to assessing and reporting on the safety of our properties?
- How are we assured that the frequency of these assessments is adequate?
- How do we gain assurance that the roles and responsibilities of health and safety – related duty holders are clearly defined and understood?
- How do we assure ourselves that these responsibilities are being fulfilled effectively?

- How do we assure ourselves that our legal responsibilities are met for fire safety? Do we receive information relating to the renewal of fire safety certificates in residential buildings which require them? How do we gain assurance that the necessary tests are carried out (evacuation; alarms)? Are we satisfied that we are meeting our obligations?
- Are we assured that we are compliant with the 2018 fire safety regulations and that there is an effective system for monitoring and component renewal, where required?
- Are we ensuring that the staff handling calls/reports from tenants are adequately trained to assess and manage the risks associated with gas safety?
- Are we assured that there are no outstanding gas safety requirements?
- How do we gain assurance that residential buildings meet other relevant safety standards (e.g. electrical safety; legionella; lift maintenance; asbestos removal)?
- How do we gain assurance that contractors working on our behalf comply with safety legislation?
- How do we gain assurance that plans and designs for construction and for major repairs projects are compliant with all relevant safety legislation and good practice advice? How are we taking account of recent amendments to the law relating to construction?
- Are we assured that all necessary actions from these assessments are implemented effectively?
- Are there any necessary actions outstanding that result (or could result) in a property being unsafe? How would such a situation be managed?
- Are there any assessments or investigations relating to tenant and resident safety planned to be undertaken in the current year? (e.g. asset management; stock condition; internal audit)
- How are we maintaining assurance that our contractors and agents are implementing safe working practices when acting on our behalf? (e.g., construction sites, repairs visits, estate maintenance, use of vehicles.)
- How do we test the validity of our information relating to tenant and resident safety?

Key Area: How well do we meet the needs of our citizens?

Quality indicator 2.1: Feedback and complaints

This is about how well the service gathers feedback and responds to it.

This directly relates to LR1, LR3 and LR4 from the SHR regulatory framework

Sources of evidence

- Website
- Social media platforms
- Leaflets/posters displayed in offices/common areas of multi-storey
- Information in newsletters
- Complaints reports to committee
- Tenant Scrutiny Reports
- Housing Volunteer Groups
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Factoring Satisfaction Survey
- Results of community walk-about
- Feedback from staff drop-in sessions
- Feedback from private sector landlords and tenants

Reflective questions

- How do we encourage feedback from tenants (including private sector), service users and other customers?
- Have our arrangements been developed in consultation with them? Have we conducted an Equality Impact Assessment on our arrangements?
- How do we gain assurance that these methods are effective?

- Do we include periodic reminders in our newsletters and other communications?
- How do we gain assurance that responses are delivered quickly?
- How regularly does the CHPP committee / Housing Board receive reports about the feedback received and the actions prompted?
- How do we use the information that we receive about complaints and other feedback about the services we provide?
- Are we assured that we respond effectively to complaints and feedback and that we learn from them? Do we report annually on complaints performance?
- How have our services and/or processes been changed because of feedback from complaints?
- How do we gain assurance that our tenants know how to complain about our services and how we deliver them? Are we confident that we provide information to tenants and other service users in ways that enable them to complain? Have we carried out an Equality Impact Assessment on our complaints handling policy/ process?
- How are we assured that we respond to complaints within agreed timescales?
- How do we gain assurance that we are following SPSO guidance in our handling of complaints?
- Are we confident that we receive reports that give us sufficient information about complaints received to enable us to monitor our performance in terms of both process and service delivery? Do we receive such reports at the right frequency?
- How have we used information from complaints to inform our delivery of services and/or change our practices? Have we reported to tenants on how we have used complaints information in this way?
- Do we compare our performance in handling complaints with that of other landlords? Are we assured that our performance meets our expectations and published standards?
- Has complaints handling been included in a recent internal audit programme?
- Are we assured that any recommendations have been implemented effectively?

Quality indicator 2.2: Improving our citizens' quality of life

This is about what real difference the work of the service makes to people's lives and wellbeing.

Sources of evidence

- Website
- Social media platforms
- Tenant Scrutiny Reports

- Housing Volunteer Groups
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Factoring Satisfaction Survey
- Results of community walk-about
- Feedback from staff drop-in sessions
- Private tenant complaints/referrals to the First-tier Tribunal
- Attendance numbers at private landlord forums

Reflective questions

- How well are tenancies sustained?
- How well are our tenancies managed?
- How are citizens' housing support enabling them to lead fulfilled and productive lives?
- How well do we support tenants experiencing difficulty to maintain their tenancy?
- How well do we liaise with other support agencies to support tenants in time of crises?
- How satisfied are tenants with their housing? What lessons have we learned from their feedback?
- What actions have we taken as a result of informal feedback gained through community walkabouts or clinics?
- Are we assured that our staff treat all citizens with dignity and respect and are helpful in trying to meet their needs?
- Are we sure that our homelessness interventions support citizens to improve their lives and life chances?
- Are we able to evidence the preventative nature of disabled adaptation grants and the improvement they bring to the quality of life for those awarded payment?
- How well are landlords and private tenants informed of their responsibilities and rights?
- How integrated and welcome do those that have been displaced feel in our city?

Quality indicator 3.1: Impact on staff

This is about the impact on staff of the way the service works and how staff are supported.

Sources of evidence

- Staff survey results
- Staff sickness / absence
- Staff grievance and disciplinary
- Relationships amongst the staff teams and with leadership

Reflective questions

- How well equipped do staff feel to deal with tenant complaints?
- How often do they have to escalate an issue to management?
- How empowered do staff feel to respond to citizens positively and constructively?
- Are staff clear about what to do when confronted with abusive behaviour?
- What support is available to staff afterwards?
- How confident do staff feel about the advice they are giving to tenants?
- How confident do staff feel about advice they are providing to citizens regarding matters concerning private sector housing and factoring services.
- What are the relationships like between staff and other relevant delivery partners?
- Do staff feel that they are improving citizens' lives through their actions?

Quality indicator 4.1: Impact on the wider community

This is about the wider impact of the service including on partners and on the council's obligations under the community planning framework

Sources of evidence

- Local newspaper reports
- Community councils
- Issues raised by elected members from their constituents
- Local Community Plan performance reports
- Feedback from local community

Reflective questions

- How is the housing service perceived amongst the local community?
- What relationships does the service have with local groups and representative bodies?
- How well does housing policy and procedures impact on other areas of delivery such as policing, community safety, and health.
- How well joined up are services in local communities where the Housing service plays a role?
- How do Housing decisions help deliver on the Community Planning Partnership goals?

Key Area: How good is our delivery of key processes?

Quality indicator 5.1: The housing stock

This is about the quality of the housing stock, how it is monitored and maintained.

The majority of this indicator relates to the SHR Annual Return on the Charter (ARC)
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Sources of evidence

- Statistical information on performance.
- SHR ARC return form
- Outcome of sampling of landlord certificates

Reflective questions

- How well have we communicated our performance to tenants and other service users?
- How have we responded to national thematic reviews by SHR and others?
- How do we know the standard and quality of our housing stock?
- When was the last time we did a full stock survey? How well did we respond to the results?
- What are we doing to improve our percentage of homes meeting the SHQS?
- How well do we delivery against our repair standards?
- How well do we work with tenants on housing adaptations?
- How comprehensive is our planned maintenance plan?
- How do we gain assurance that our housing stock is being used to meet housing need effectively?
- How do we gain assurance that our housing stock is being managed effectively?
- How do we gain assurance that our housing stock is being maintained in accordance with safety standards?
- How do we gain assurance that private landlords in the city are complying with their responsibilities?

Quality indicator 5.2: Tenant relationships and communication

This is about how the service communicates with tenants and how it builds trusting and productive relationships with them.

This directly relates to AN5, LR2 and LR3 and CH5 from the SHR regulatory framework

Sources of evidence

- Current Engagement Plan
- Charter report to tenants
- Website
- Social media platforms
- Leaflets displayed in offices
- Information in newsletters
- Complaints reports committee
- Charter statistics
- Internal audit

Reflective questions

- How well do we communicate directly to tenants and service users?
- How do we know what communication channels they use or want to use?
- How well suited to their needs and requirements is our communication?
- How effective is our website at providing relevant information that answers questions and reduces the need for further contact with staff in the service?
- Does our communication reflect plain English and avoid the use of jargon and technical terms where possible?
- What opportunities do we give for feedback?
- What relationship do we have with our tenants and service users? How do they regard us? What would they say about us to others?
- Did we publish our annual Charter report by October in the period covered by this Annual Assurance Statement? How did we make the report available to our tenants and service users?

- Is our Engagement Plan easily accessible via our website? How do we know?
- Have we promoted our Engagement Plan in our newsletter?
- How have we made our report available to tenants and other service users?
- Is our report easily accessible from our website?
- Have we promoted our report on our social media platforms and in our newsletter?
- Are we assured that our tenants have been consulted about the format in which our report is published? How have we gained that assurance?
- How do we make the SHR's leaflet on reporting significant performance failures available to our tenants?

Quality indicator 5.3: Inclusion, equality, and fairness

This is about EDI and how embedded that is in practice

This directly relates to EH1 and 2 from the SHR regulatory framework and area 1 from the CI framework

Sources of evidence

- Equality and diversity policy
- Scheme of Assistance policy
- Recruitment policy
- ASB policy
- Provision of policies and information in alternative formats and languages
- Availability of interpreting services
- Accessible offices/ venues
- Protected Characteristics Data Monitoring Reports

Reflective questions

- How do we demonstrate our compassion towards tenants?
- How do we demonstrate dignity and respect for their rights as an individual?
- How do we help to uphold their rights as a citizen free from discrimination?

- How do we help people make decisions and choices about their lives
- How do we ensure that people are supported to achieve their wishes and aspirations
- How do we help people feel safe and protected but have the opportunity to take informed risks.
- How well do we provide support based on relevant evidence, guidance, best practice, and standards?
- How do we ensure people are fully involved in the professional assessment of their holistic needs
- Are a range of approaches and mechanisms available to support community engagement. For example, digital, written, and verbal communication, including access to translation, and specialist communications tools.
- How can people choose the support they need and want
- How do we ensure that people experience high-quality support as result of planning, commissioning and contracting arrangements that work well
- How do we ensure the right support from the right people at the right time?
- Do our policies consider and take account of equality and human rights implications? Do we carry out Equality Impact Assessments when reviewing and developing policies?
- How are we assured that our policies and practices do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly?
- How are we assured that our policies and practices do not allow harassment or victimisation? How confident are we that any instances will be identified or reported and addressed quickly and effectively?
- Do the reports that we consider include reference/links to equality and human rights implications?
- Do we carry out equality impact assessments on any proposals relating to service delivery? How do we use these assessments to support our decision-making?
- How do we monitor our performance in promoting equality and human rights?
- Have we established systems and processes for collecting, storing, and monitoring equality data? Have we taken account of good practice advice in respect of complying with regulatory requirements? Are we assured that our processes comply with GDPR?
- Do our committee reports include consideration of equality? Do we carry out Equality Impact Assessments on all plans, policies, and proposals?
- Is equality at the heart of our service delivery, allocations, and recruitment practices?

Key Area: How good is our operational management?

Quality indicator 6.1: Policy review and development

This is about how the policies support the work of the service, providing guidance and clarity.

Sources of evidence

- Records of policy development
- Engagement in policy development by service users and partners
- Relevant policies in place
- Revision schedule for every policy

Reflective questions

- Do we have all the policies we need to inform our work?
- Are staff confident about the policies we have and how to apply them
- Who was involved in the development of our policies? Could we have involved anyone else?
- Have we developed an appropriate strategic/policy framework to meet our responsibilities?
- Do our processes for the recruitment and appointment of consultants ensure that we are appointing appropriately qualified and experienced specialists?
- How visible are our policies?
- How accessible are our policies?
- Have we used plain English where possible?
- How do we communicate the content of our policies and their implications for service users?
- Do all of our policies have a clear review schedule, and is this adhered to?

Quality indicator 6.2: Tenant Participation and involvement

This is about how the service involves tenants individually and collectively in the design and delivery of the service.

This directly relates to area 5.2 from the CI framework and CH2 from the SHR framework

Sources of evidence

- Observations of practice and interactions.
- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - relatives and carers
 - staff.
- Support plans.
- Personal plan review and action plan minutes.
- Meeting minutes and action plans for people, staff and relatives.
- Systems for acting on feedback, including complaints.
- Tenant scrutiny reports and action plans
- Minutes from committee meetings where scrutiny reports considered

Reflective questions

- How well are carers, friends and family members encouraged to be involved and work in partnership with the service?
- How representative is the group of people we have involved?
- Do staff regard tenant participation and involvement as a core part of their work, and that of the service, or as a burden?
- How are the views of carers and family members heard and meaningfully considered?
- Are we assured that tenants have had opportunities to contribute to how performance is monitored?
- How did we agree our approach to tenant scrutiny with tenants?
- Do tenants determine the scrutiny priorities?
- Are we assured that tenants and service users are actively and meaningfully involved in providing feedback on performance and/or scrutinising it through tenant panels or scrutiny groups etc? Do we receive reports on the results from tenant scrutiny exercises?
- Are we confident that our engagement activities provide us with access to a representative range of tenant opinions?
- How do we gain assurance that tenant views inform and influence our delivery of services?

- How have tenants influenced our performance? How are tenants involved in monitoring our performance?
- Have we sought (or considered seeking) specialist support in developing our engagement and consultation with tenants and/or in assessing its effectiveness?
- Are we confident that we provide appropriate support to tenants to enable them to exercise their scrutiny role effectively?
- Do we include information about how tenants can become involved on our website, social media platforms and in our publications?
- Do we publish tenant scrutiny reports and our responses?
- Do we use our equality data to inform our engagement with tenants? Are we assured that there are effective arrangements to support tenants with specific needs to participate in our scrutiny and engagement activities?
- Do we have effective arrangements for engaging with other service users (e.g. owners who purchase factoring services; tenants of other landlords who use our support services; family members of tenants and residents in our supported accommodation)?
- How have we taken account of the views of tenants and service users about our performance in the preparation of the AAS?
- How do we consult/engage with tenants about assessing our performance? Are we assured that we make effective use of engagement/consultation to drive service improvement?

Quality indicator 6.3: Planning of key processes

This is about how planning helps ensure effective and efficient delivery, especially during peak periods or crises.

This directly relates to area 5.1 from the CI framework

Sources of evidence

- Observation of practice and interaction.
- Personal plans, daily recording notes.
- Review minutes and action records.
- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - relatives and carers

- staff.

Reflective questions

- How effectively do leaders and staff use personal plans to deliver support effectively?
- Are personal plans reviewed and updated regularly, and as people's outcomes change?
- How are people involved in directing and leading their own support?
- How do we ensure plans specify SMART objectives and measurable success criteria, based on a manageable number of key priorities.
- Do we have in place clear lines of accountability to ensure that actions are achieved and progress is reported publicly.
- Do we effectively engage staff in the development and implementation of plans so that they understand fully how their work contributes to achievement of key strategic priorities.
- How do we ensure that plans promote equalities and demonstrate commitment to narrow the outcome gap by addressing poverty and deprivation.
- Do we demonstrate effective joint working to improve services to citizens of Aberdeen.
- Do we have in place robust systems for monitoring performance and measuring improvement, as well as for regular reporting of progress to strategic groups.
- Does our planning reflect a learning environment to creatively develop and improve practice.
- Do we have effective approaches in place to jointly identify emerging or potential risk and take timely, proportionate action to mitigate this.

Quality indicator 6.4: Performance management and quality improvement

This is about performance management and quality assurance ensures high standards of service delivery and improved outcomes.

Sources of evidence

- Performance management framework.
- Quality assurance framework.
- Data sets and how they are used within the organisation.

- Data reports from a range of multi-agency groups.
- Processes and procedures for quality assurance.
- Reports to and from quality assurance groups.
- Case records
- Performance appraisals.
- Team plans.
- Annual reports

Reflective questions

- Do we have an up-to-date performance framework with an agreed set of standards and outcome indicators?
- How effectively is progress overseen by accountable senior leaders and elected members who provide appropriate levels of scrutiny and challenge?
- How well do we analyse data from a range of sources and use this effectively to inform planning and service development?
- Do we regularly monitor performance against stretching targets, taking corrective action when necessary to achieve goals?
- Do we report publicly and transparently on the quality of services?
- Do we achieve consistently high standards in the quality of operational practice as a result of robust quality assurance arrangements?
- Do we use performance information and quality assurance approaches to continually strive to improve the quality of work and improve outcomes?
- How well do we support operational managers and staff to make effective use of performance data to support continuous improvement?
- Do we create a safe learning culture that is enquiring and aspirational and based on performance and self-evaluation?
- Do we successfully communicate to staff expectations and aspirations to deliver services of the highest quality?
- Do we carefully plan and co-ordinate a cycle of single agency and joint self-evaluation based on a manageable number of priorities?
- Do we gather robust evidence by comparing findings from a number of different activities?
- How well do we support and encourage staff to carry out self-evaluation as an integral part of their work, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to do this well?
- Do we routinely gather views and information about the experiences of tenants to inform self-evaluation?

- Do we communicate clear improvement priorities so that staff understand fully what they need to do to improve the quality of their work?
- How successfully do we build the capacity of staff to secure change and improvement through self-evaluation?

Quality indicator 7.1: Staffing

This is about the number, skills, and competence of staff

This directly relates to area 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 from the CI framework and WB1 from the SHR framework

Sources of evidence

- The recruitment policy and procedure.
- Analysis of staff skills.
- Interview records.
- How fitness checks are undertaken.
- Relevant HR or personnel files.
- The induction policy, procedure, and practice.
- Staff job descriptions and roles.
- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - relatives and carers
 - staff.
- Mandatory training for different grades of staff.
- Training needs analysis and training plan.
- Staff development plan and outcome.
- Staff supervision and appraisal records.
- How the service manages staff practice and conduct concerns
- Observe practice and interaction.
- Staff rota and deployment.
- Staff roles and duties.

- Any dependency assessment tools used.
- The care and support plans and assessments of people and how this informs staffing.
- Feedback from other relevant professionals.
- Whistleblowing policy
- Reports relating to any whistleblowing cases that have taken place

Reflective questions

- How do people benefit from safer recruitment principles being used?
- How well does recruitment and induction reflect outcomes for people experiencing care?
- How well is induction tailored to the training needs of the individual staff member?
- How well does induction integrate a member of staff into the vision, mission and values of the cluster and service?
- How well does staff competence and practice support improving outcomes for people?
- How well does staff development support improving outcomes for people?
- How is staff practice supported and improved through effective supervision and appraisal?
- Is there an effective process for assessing how many staff hours are needed?
- Do staffing arrangements support positive outcomes for people?
- Are staff flexible and how well do they support each other to work as a team to benefit people?
- How have we made staff and committee members aware of our policy on whistleblowing and the process to be followed where concerns exist?
- How are we assured that staff and committee members are aware of the policy and process?
- Do we promote the whistleblowing policy regularly?
- Have we ensured the Whistleblowing Policy applies and is promoted throughout our group structure?
- Have we provided any training to staff and governing body/committee members on whistleblowing?

Quality indicator 8.1: Partnerships and resources

This is about how the service leverages partnership with others to maximise the use of its own resources.

Sources of evidence

- List of partner agencies
- Feedback from partner agencies about relationship with the service
- Examples of joint work between the agencies and other partners
- Lead times to deliver resource requests
- Number of requests for additional resources
- Feedback from staff about resource availability

Reflective questions

- Are we working with all the partners we need to?
- How effective are these partnerships?
- Do we treat partners as such or more as contractors?
- Do these partnerships really improve the services to users?
- Is there more we should do in partnership with others?
- Are we maximising the collective resources available to the service and partner agencies?
- Do we have the resources we need to deliver an effective service?
- What compromises are we making to cope with resource pressures? Are we transparent and consistent about these?

Key Area: How good is our strategic leadership?

Quality indicator 9.1: Vision, values and aims

This is about how embedded are the vision, values and aims and how they support the work of the service.

This directly relates to area 2.1 from the CI framework

Sources of evidence

- Observation of practice and interactions.
- Quality assurance of relevant policies
- procedures, records, and outcomes.
- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - staff
 - relatives and carers
 - other professionals.
- Meeting minutes and action plans.
- Examining how people quality assure what they do.
- Effectiveness and coherence of the improvement plan.

Reflective questions

- Is the vision, values, aims and objectives for the service clear and inform everyday practice?
- Who was involved in their development? Does everyone feel that they “own” the vision?
- How well is innovation supported?
- How deep is the ownership of the vision, Mission, etc amongst all staff?
- Are there are clear links between the vision, values and aims of the partnership and national priorities and aspirations?

- Do leaders promote an open learning culture in which staff feel safe to challenge and are supported to raise serious concerns through whistleblowing or other procedures?

Quality indicator 9.2: Leadership and direction

This is about the effectiveness of leadership at all levels and how that helps direct the work of all staff.

This directly relates to area 2.2 from the CI framework

Sources of evidence

- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - staff
 - relatives and carers
 - other professionals.
- Minutes of meetings and action plans for people, staff, and relatives.
- Quality assurance of relevant policies, procedures, records, and outcomes.
- The improvement plan.
- Accident and incident records, audits, and outcomes.
- Complaint and concerns records, audits, and outcome.
- How the service gathers feedback and takes action, including how this is built into induction and supervision.
- Analysis and evaluations from participation methods and activities

Reflective questions

- Do leaders, senior managers, elected members have a clear understanding of the local and national context and provide strong leadership and direction in developing housing services?
- Is that direction reinforced by leaders at all levels to ensure clarity and consistency?
- Are the senior leaders giving clear and consistent messages to other staff?
- Are senior leaders approachable whilst ensuring that they do not undermine the autonomy and leadership of staff?

- Do all staff recognise that they are leaders in the service? How do they interpret that leadership role?
- How well is empowerment and delegated decision-making implemented at all levels?
- Do leaders enable staff to be confident in exercising their initiative, taking responsibility, and adopting lead roles? How well do leaders lead by example and role model positive behaviour.
- How responsive are leaders to feedback and how well do they use learning to improve?
- Do all leaders have the skills and capacity to oversee improvement as well as business as usual delivery?
- Do leaders employ a range of very effective methods to communicate directly with staff?
- Do leaders ensure that staff have opportunities to jointly develop skills and learn from each other?
- Do leaders value and encourage staff and recognise and celebrate their achievements?
- Do leaders exemplify the high performance expected from staff in delivering high quality services through strong and purposeful teamwork?

Quality indicator 9.3: Leadership of collaboration to support people

This is about how the service leads in collaboration with others to secure better outcomes for the citizens of Aberdeen.

This directly relates to area 2.3 from the CI framework

Sources of evidence

- Look at the procedures, practice and experience of people who are using the service for the first time.
- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - relatives and carers
 - staff.
- Observations of practice and interactions.
- Look at the information sharing policy and practice.
- The arrangements for multiagency working and how these benefit people.
- Links the service has to local resources and how these are used and accessed.

Reflective questions

- How well do leaders understand the key roles of other partners and their responsibilities?
- How well do services work in partnership with others to secure the best outcomes for people?
- How similar or different is team working across parts internal to the council and outwith?
- Do we maximise our collaboration with other teams in ACC to secure our common outcomes?
- Is there a spirit of collaboration or competition between leaders in the service and other partner teams and agencies?
- How do leaders oversee effective transitions for staff – between roles, teams or even partners?
- Are leaders visible and have a high personal profile with staff across services and agencies?
- Are leaders accessible and responsive when challenged and held in high regard by stakeholders?
- How well do leaders promote an ethos of teamwork and establish a climate of professional collaboration at all levels?
- Do leaders ensure that staff understand the positive benefits of multi-agency team working and demonstrate this in their practice?
- Do leaders recognise achievements and celebrate success across agencies and partnerships?

Quality indicator 9.4: Leadership of change

This is about how change is managed, and how everyone is supported on the journey of change.

This directly relates to area 2.2 from the CI framework

Sources of evidence

- Observation of practice and interactions.
- Feedback from:
 - people who use the service
 - relatives
 - staff.
- Views of managers at all levels.
- The quality assurance policy, procedure, practice, and outcomes.
- Staff training records, appraisals, supervision, and deployment.
- The improvement plan

Reflective questions

- How well does quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, drive change and improvement where necessary?
- Do leaders successfully steer services through the challenges associated with achieving the right balance between stability and change?
- Do leaders at all levels make effective decisions about staff and resources?
- Do leaders at all levels empower staff to innovate?
- How are leaders supporting staff to change and adapt to different circumstances?
- How are staff supported to suggest and try innovative approaches?
- How are new approaches and ideas evaluated, and then if appropriate mainstreamed?
- Is leadership having a positive impact on staff?
- Do leaders make very effective use of an appropriate range of relevant structured improvement models?
- Have leaders created a culture of reviewing services and planning improvements?
- Do leaders constantly explore ways of driving up capacity for improvement through self-evaluation?
- Do leaders have an acute awareness of how well services are performing?
- Do leaders conscientiously evaluate whether or not changes to systems and practices are delivering the required results?
- Do leaders make sure successes act as a catalyst to implement further improvements in the quality of services and outcomes people most in need of care and support?
- Do leaders explore new ways of working through applying findings from research, service redesign, scrutiny reports, recommendations from learning reviews/significant case reviews and significant incidents?

Key Area: What is our capacity for improvement?

This is an overall evaluation of how well placed the service is to know itself and continue to improve.

Sources of evidence

- The improvement plan – especially time taken to complete actions
- Trends in data
- Number of recurring issues that have not been adequately dealt with
- Time taken to approve improvement actions
- Coherence of improvement actions
- Success in designing and delivering improvements
- Staff attitude towards continuous improvement

Reflective questions

- How well does the service understand its own performance – areas of strength and areas of weakness?
- Is the evidence to support this robust and analysed effectively?
- What is our track record of effecting improvement?
- What is our resource capacity to support improvement?
- How confident are we that we can secure year on year improvement to the quality of service delivery?

Annex B: Mapping of regulatory frameworks against the Quality Improvement Framework

Key: **Care Inspectorate**. **Scottish Housing Regulator**. **Regulator of Social Housing (England)**

What key outcomes have we achieved?	How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?	How good is our delivery of key processes?	How good is our operational management?	How good is our strategic leadership?
1. Key performance outcomes	2. Meeting tenants needs	5. Delivery of key processes	6. Operational management	9. Strategic leadership 2. How good is our leadership?
1.1 Improvements in performance 1.5 Performance information CH3 Report performance in achieving/progressing towards Charter outcomes and standards to tenants and other service users by October each year. Agree the format of reporting with tenants and other service users; ensure it is accessible, and that language is plain and jargon free CH4 Report annually on performance to tenants and other service users and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of performance against each relevant Charter outcome Relevant comparisons including with previous years, other landlords and national performance Plans for delivering improvement	2.1 Feedback and complaints 6 Complaints LR1 Each landlord must provide tenants, residents, and service users with easy and effective ways to provide feedback and raise concerns and ensure that it considers such information and provides a quick response LR4 Each landlord must ensure it has effective arrangements to learn from complaints and from other tenant and service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance 2.2: Improving our citizens' quality of life	5.1 The housing stock SHR ARC return 1.1 Stock quality 1.4 Repairs, maintenance, and planned improvements 3.1 Allocations and lettings 3.2 Tenancy sustainment and evictions 3.3 Tenure 3.4 Mutual exchange	6.1 policy review and development	9.1 Vision, values and aims

<p>1.2 Meeting legal obligations</p> <p>AN1 Prepare and submit Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) by 31 October</p> <p>CH1 Annually submit an Annual Return on the Charter in accordance with published guidance</p> <p>AN2 Notify SHR of any material changes during the year</p> <p>AN3 Have assurance and evidence of meeting legal obligations relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing and homelessness services Equality and human rights <p>day-to-day service delivery</p>		<p>5.2 Tenant relationships and communication</p> <p>Methods for tenants and service users to comment on the style of reporting</p> <p>CH5 Make SHR's Landlord Report easily accessible to tenants, including online</p> <p>AN5 Make the Engagement Plan available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online</p> <p>1.4 Information about landlord services</p> <p>LR2 Each landlord must make information on reporting significant performance failures, including SHR leaflet, available to its tenants.</p> <p>LR3 Provide tenants and other service users with the information they need to exercise their right to complain and seek redress and respond to tenants within the timescales outlined in its service standards, in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).</p>	<p>6.2 Tenant involvement</p> <p>CH2 Involve tenants and other relevant service users in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree approach with tenants Ensure the approach gives tenants a real and demonstrable say in performance assessment Publicise the approach to scrutiny to tenants Ensure the approach can be verified and demonstrate that it has happened <p>Involve other service users appropriately having asked and taken account of their needs and wishes.</p> <p>1.3 Engagement with tenants</p> <p>5.2: Carers, friends and family members are encouraged to be involved</p>	<p>9.2 Leadership and direction</p>
<p>1.3 Health and safety</p> <p>1.3 Health and safety</p> <p>Tenant and resident safety</p> <p>AN4 Notify the SHR of any reports from statutory or regulatory authorities or insurance providers relating to safety concerns</p> <p>AN4 Notify SHR of any tenant or resident safety matters reported to or being</p>	<p>3. Impact on staff</p>	<p>5.3 Inclusion, equality, and fairness</p> <p>1. How well do we support people's wellbeing?</p> <p>1.1 Fairness and respect</p> <p>1.2 Diverse needs</p> <p>2.1 Safety of shared spaces</p> <p>EH2 Collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for existing and</p>	<p>6.3 Planning of key processes</p> <p>5.1: Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes</p> <p>2.2 Local cooperation</p>	<p>9.3 Leadership of change and innovation</p>

investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)		<p>new tenants; people on waiting lists; GBMs and staff</p> <p>EH1 Be assured and have evidence that equality and human rights issues are considered properly in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision-making • the design and review of internal and external policies <p>1.5 Adaptations 1.2 Decency 2.3 Anti-social behaviour and hate incidents 2.4 Domestic abuse</p>	6.4 Performance management and quality improvement	
	4. Impact on the community		7. Staffing	
			<p>3. How good is our staff team?</p> <p>WB1 Have a whistleblowing policy and effective arrangements for governing body members (GBMs) and staff which is easily available and promoted</p>	
			8. Partnerships and resources	
10 Capacity for continued Improvement				

Key: Care Inspectorate. Scottish Housing Regulator. Regulator of Social Housing (England)

Annex C – Scottish Housing Regulator - Regulatory Framework

The regulatory requirements set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator can be found on their website at: [Regulatory Framework | Scottish Housing Regulator](#). This includes detail of our requirements to prepare and submit, (in accordance with published guidance):

- An Annual Assurance Statement and
- An Annual Return on the Charter

The table below is a checklist of the requirements for the SHR Annual Assurance Statement:

Ref	Requirements	Relevant Regulatory Standards (RS)
AN1	Prepare and submit Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) by 31 October	No Standard refers directly to the ASS but RS 1.3, 2.2 and 2.5 are relevant
AN2	Notify SHR of any material changes during the year	RS 2.2 and 2.5
AN3	Have assurance and evidence of meeting legal obligations relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and homelessness services • Equality and human rights • Tenant and resident safety 	RS 1.3 (in general terms) RS 4.1
AN4	Notify SHR of any tenant or resident safety matters reported to or being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	RS 2.5
AN4	Notify the SHR of any reports from statutory or regulatory authorities or insurance providers relating to safety concerns	RS 2.5
AN5	Make the Engagement Plan available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online	Standard 2 RS 2.1
CH1	Annually submit an Annual Return on the Charter in accordance with published guidance	RS 1.3

CH2	<p>Involve tenants and other relevant service users in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree approach with tenants • Ensure the approach gives tenants a real and demonstrable say in performance assessment • Publicise the approach to scrutiny to tenants • Ensure the approach can be verified and demonstrate that it has happened <p>Involve other service users appropriately having asked and taken account of their needs and wishes</p>	Standard 2 RS 2.1,2.2, 2.4, 4.2
CH3	Report performance in achieving/progressing towards Charter outcomes and standards to tenants and other service users by October each year	Standard 2 RS 2.1 and 2.4 RS 1.3
CH3	Agree the format of reporting with tenants and other service users; ensure it is accessible and that language is plain and jargon free	RS 1.3 and 2.4
CH4	<p>Report annually on performance to tenants and other service users and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of performance against each relevant Charter outcome • Relevant comparisons including with previous years, other landlords and national performance • Plans for delivering improvement • Methods for tenants and service users to comment on the style of reporting 	RS 1.3 Standard 2
CH5	Make SHR's Landlord Report easily accessible to tenants, including online	Standard 2
WB1	Have a whistleblowing policy and effective arrangements for governing body members (GBMs) and staff which is easily available and promoted	Standard 5 RS 5.2 and 5.6
EH1	<p>Be assured and have evidence that equality and human rights issues are considered properly in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision-making • the design and review of internal and external policies • day-to-day service delivery 	All Standards RS 1.3 RS 4.1 RS 5.3

EH2	Collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for existing and new tenants; people on waiting lists; GBMs and staff	RS 1.3 (in general terms)
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In addition, the Scottish Federation of Housing Association (SFHA - [The voice of Scotland's housing associations. | SFHA](#)) has produced a toolkit to assist completing a self-evaluation to inform the preparation of the Annual Assurance Statement.

Annex D: Care Inspectorate Regulatory Framework

1	How well do we support people's wellbeing?	1.1 People experience compassion, dignity, and respect. 1.2. People get the most out of life. 1.3. People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support. 1.4. People are getting the right service for them. 1.5. People's health and wellbeing benefits from safe infection prevention and control practices and procedures.
2	How good is our leadership?	2.1. Vision and values positively inform practice. 2.2. Quality assurance and improvement is led well. 2.3. Leaders collaborate to support people. 2.4. Staff are led well.
3	How good is our staff team?	3.1. Staff have been recruited well. 3.2. Staff have the right knowledge, competence, and development to support people. 3.3. Staffing arrangements are right, and staff work well together.
5	How well is our care and support planned?	5.1. Assessment and personal planning reflect people's outcomes and wishes. 5.2. Carers, friends, and family members are encouraged to be involved.

The Care Inspectorate Self-Evaluation guide can be accessed via the following link: [Quality framework for housing support services | Care Inspectorate Hub](#)

Annex E: Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) - Regulatory Standards (England)

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) defines the regulatory standards which set the outcomes that social landlords in England must deliver for tenants. The new framework for consumer regulation has been in place since 1 April 2024 and the table below highlights the consumer standards. Further details of the regulatory framework in England can be found at: [Regulatory standards for landlords - GOV.UK](#).

Safety and Quality Standard – 1 April 2024	
1.1 Stock quality	Registered providers must have an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that reliably informs their provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for tenants (see the glossary of terms for a definition).
1.2 Decency	Registered providers must ensure that tenants’ homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government’s Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator.
1.3 Health and safety	When acting as landlords, registered providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.
1.4 Repairs, maintenance, and planned improvements	Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient, and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.

1.5 Adaptations	Registered providers must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services.
Neighbourhood and Community Standard – 2 April 2024	
1.1 Safety of shared spaces	Registered providers must work co-operatively with tenants (see the glossary of terms for a definition), other landlords and relevant organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-and-community-standard .
1.2 Local cooperation	Registered providers must co-operate with relevant partners to promote social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in the areas where they provide social housing.
1.3 Anti-social behaviour and hate incidents	Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police, and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.
1.3 Domestic abuse	Registered providers must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.

Tenancy Standard – 2 April 2024	
1.1 Allocations and lettings	Registered providers must allocation and let their homes in a fair and transparent way that takes the needs of tenants (see the glossary of terms for definition) and prospective tenants into account.
1.2 Tenancy sustainment and evictions	Registered providers must support tenants to maintain their tenancy or licence. Where a registered provider ends a tenancy or licence, they must offer affected tenants advice and assistance
1.3 Tenure	Registered providers shall offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock 3.3.2 They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.
1.4 Mutual exchange	Registered providers must support relevant tenants living in eligible housing to mutually exchange their homes.
Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard (including Tenant Satisfaction Measures) – 2 April 2024	
1.1 Fairness & Respect	Registered providers must treat tenants (see the glossary of terms for a definition) and prospective tenants with fairness and respect.

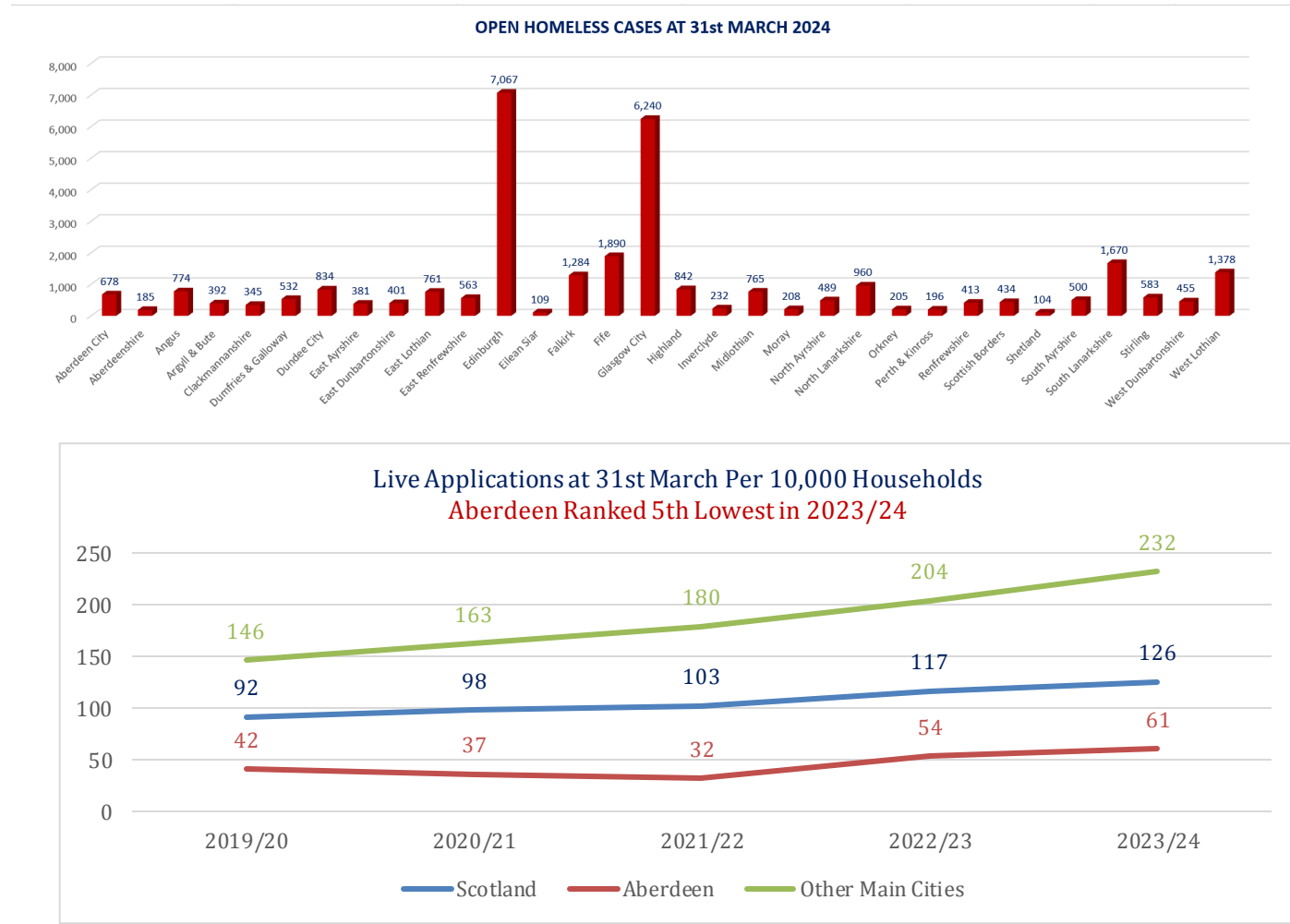
1.2 Diverse Needs	In relation to the housing and landlord services they provide, registered providers must take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants and, where relevant, prospective tenants.
1.3 Engagement with tenants	Registered providers must take tenants' views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered.
1.4 Information about landlord services	Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
1.5 Performance information	Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services.
1.6 Complaints	Registered providers must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.



Homeless Benchmarking Summary Report (2023/24)

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1. Official figures released by the Scottish Government on the 24th of September 2024 provide a national picture of homelessness based on the HL-1 dataset collected by all 32 Scottish local authorities. The information presented focusses in on the key strategic priorities central to alleviating homelessness and achieving rapid rehousing across Scotland. The publication can be viewed via the link below. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/homelessness-statistics/>
- 1.2. The purpose of this summary report is to interpret the findings and provide a local overview of how homelessness in Aberdeen City compares with other local authorities. Throughout the summary particular attention has been given to the performance of the other three major cities – Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee. Reference will also be given to neighboring Aberdeenshire and to outlier Local Authorities as there may be something to learn from them.
- 1.3. Any reference to statistical information contained within the summary report can be found [Homeless Benchmarking Graphs 2023-24.xlsx \(sharepoint.com\)](#).
- 1.4. **Note:** Validity of information contained is only as good as the data sent to the Scottish Government and timeliness’ of this. Figures will be subject to future change if there is any updating or backdating of records post data collection. For benchmarking purposes the **Main Cities** within the graphs are **Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow**.



2. KEY FINDINGS

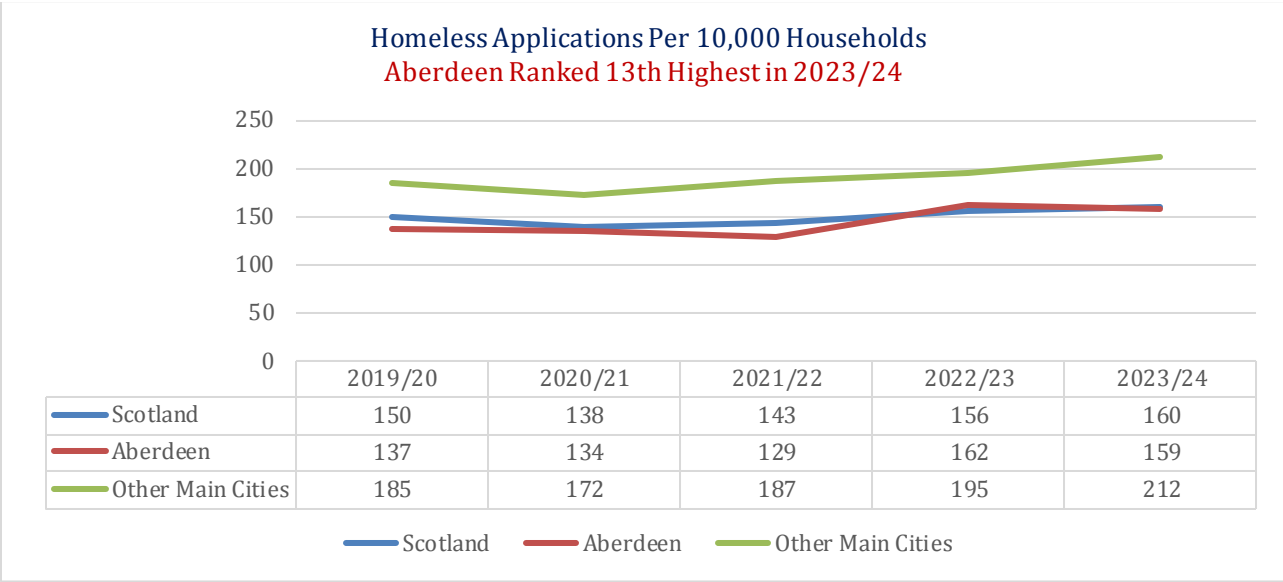
- 2.1. The national publication reports that 2023/24 was yet another tough operating year for homelessness services across Scotland, one with further increases in homeless applications, placement times and record levels of households occupying temporary accommodation.
- 2.2. Case closure rates across Scotland did pick up in 2023/24, however failed to keep pace with growth in new homeless demand and due to this a further rise in the homeless backlog emerged, placing even greater strain on an already fragile system.
- 2.3. Many local authorities continue to cite the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and struggles with backlogs caused by the ongoing effects of COVID-19 for the rise in these new and existing demands. Suspension of local connection provisions in November 2022 and the relocation of displaced Ukrainian households has also been noted as adding to the strain felt, particularly in areas disproportionately affected by these factors.
- 2.4. The presenting figures for Aberdeen City paint a mixed picture, yet the overall mid-term trends broadly mirror what is happening nationally, particularly in terms of increases in new and existing demands. There were however, encouraging signs that applicant demands began to plateau in 2023/24, yet do still remain high.
- 2.5. Despite seeing a downturn in 2023/24, the one area that Aberdeen City continues to remain strong in and sets them apart from many other larger, urban local authorities across the country is minimising the time households spend in temporary accommodation and securing settled outcomes for homeless households as quickly as possible - the underlying principle of national rapid rehousing policy.
- 2.6. It must be borne in mind that increases in demand, and slowdown in outcomes did not begin to bite until the second half of 2022/23 in Aberdeen City leading to excessive backlogs and waiting times. Due to this many of the timebound indicators have felt the full effect of this retraction in 2023/24. However, the majority of longstanding cases have now secured outcomes and because of this it is anticipated that performance against these measures will again begin to stabilise and perhaps improve in 2024/25.
- 2.7. The table below provides a snapshot of performance against some key strategic measures, whereupon a more detailed national/local comparative summary is provided in the following sections.

Indicator	ACC	ACC Trend	National	National Trend
Homeless Applications	1763	-1%	40,685	+4%
Households Assessed as Homeless	1270	No Change	33,619	+3%
Repeat Homelessness	3.5%	+0.4%	3.9%	+0.2%
Average Length of Time to Assess an Application (days)	39	+17	19	-2
Average Length of Homeless Journey (days)	166	+44	297	+9 days
Households Accommodated in Temp on 31 st March	442	+11%	16,330	+ 9%
Average Time Spent in Temp at Case Closure (days)	127	+27	226	+1

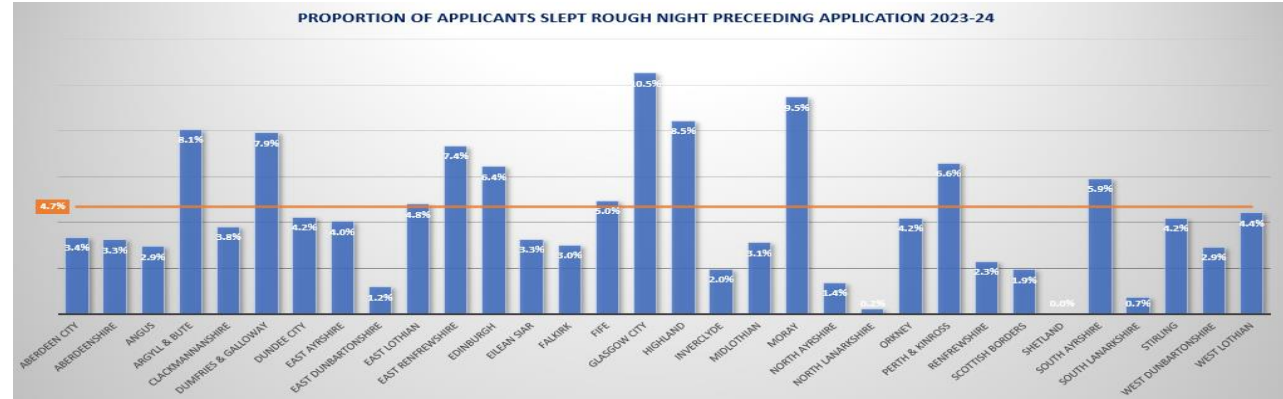
- 2.8. As part of their matrix to measure risk, the Scottish Housing Regulator use national averages as a tool to monitor and engage with poorer performing local authorities. On the evidence presented here, there are many key areas where Aberdeen City's performance continued to deteriorate and where they are now found to be performing below the national average. Some of the more concerning areas where Aberdeen City reported higher rates, or witnessed significant adverse shifts in homeless performance are outlined below.
- Decision making times rose to 39 days seeing Aberdeen City post the 2nd highest time of all authorities.
 - Increase in non-statutory homeless decisions where rates are now the 2nd highest across Scotland. Higher levels of applicants withdrawing their application and losing contact were key drivers.
 - Levels of Intentionality continue to climb where Aberdeen City have gone from having the lowest rates in 2020/21 to the 8th highest in 2023/24.
 - The homeless journey increased by 44 days, the fourth sharpest rise across Scotland. Despite this Aberdeen are still among the top performers but have slipped down the table in the last 2 years.
 - New levels of homeless demand continue to outstrip case closure rates leading to further backlogs. Due to this live homeless applications increased by 15% following a 72% increase in 2022/23.
 - Temporary accommodation occupancy levels continue to increase where more households with dependent children were accommodated at year end.

3. HOMELESS DEMAND

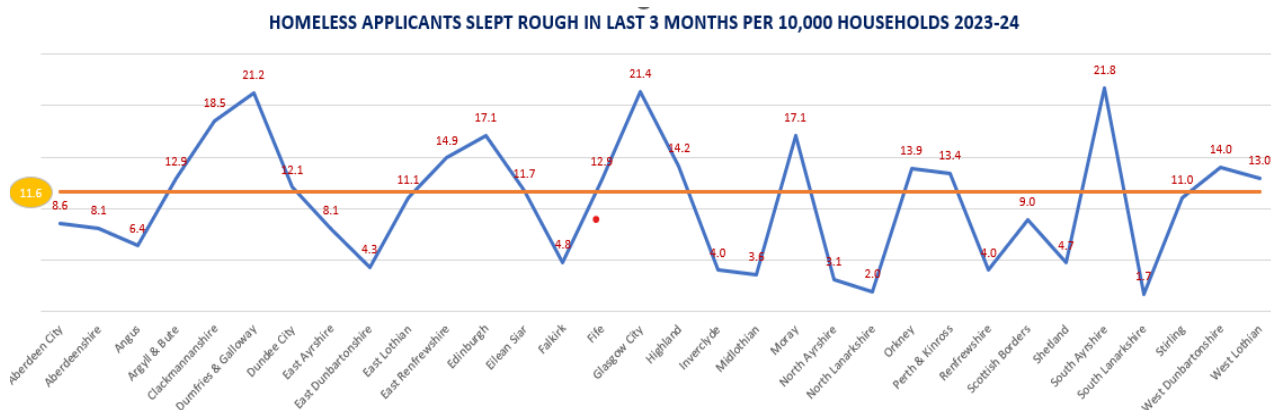
- 3.1. In 2023/24 there were 40,685 homeless applications received across Scotland, an increase of 1,377 (+4%) when compared with 2022/23. 17 local authorities reported a rise in homeless applications with Inverclyde experiencing the largest proportionate rise of 29% and Glasgow seeing the largest numerical rise (983 more applications in the year). A -1% decline sees Aberdeen City among only 15 local authorities to experience a reduction in homeless applications. East Dunbartonshire recorded the highest reduction of -22%, followed by East Ayrshire -19% and Aberdeenshire at -16%. At -3% Dundee reported the biggest reduction of the four major cities and it would be helpful to understand how Dundee have managed to achieve this. Glasgow (+15%) and Edinburgh (+5%) both reported rises in applications. The proportion of all applications (nationally) presenting in Aberdeen has remained unchanged since 2019/20 and still sits at 4%. The city is an outlier with regard to the percentage of applicants (5% locally compared to 3% nationally) who only have a local connection with another local authority, only Renfrewshire and South Ayrshire have a higher percentage. There is a need to try to understand this better.
- 3.2. At a rate of 71.9 applications per 10,000 households, East Dumbartonshire recorded the lowest levels of demand across Scotland in 2023/24, followed closely by Aberdeenshire at 72.8. Aberdeen City recorded the 13th highest rate at 158.8 (an improved position from last year when placed 11th), and is now slightly below the Scottish average of 160.5 (our rate last year was above). When compared with the other three major cities our data is broadly in line with Edinburgh. Both Glasgow and Dundee recorded higher levels at 260 and 197 respectively. As a Local Authority we need to work to maintain emerging improvement in our relative position compared to other Local Authorities.



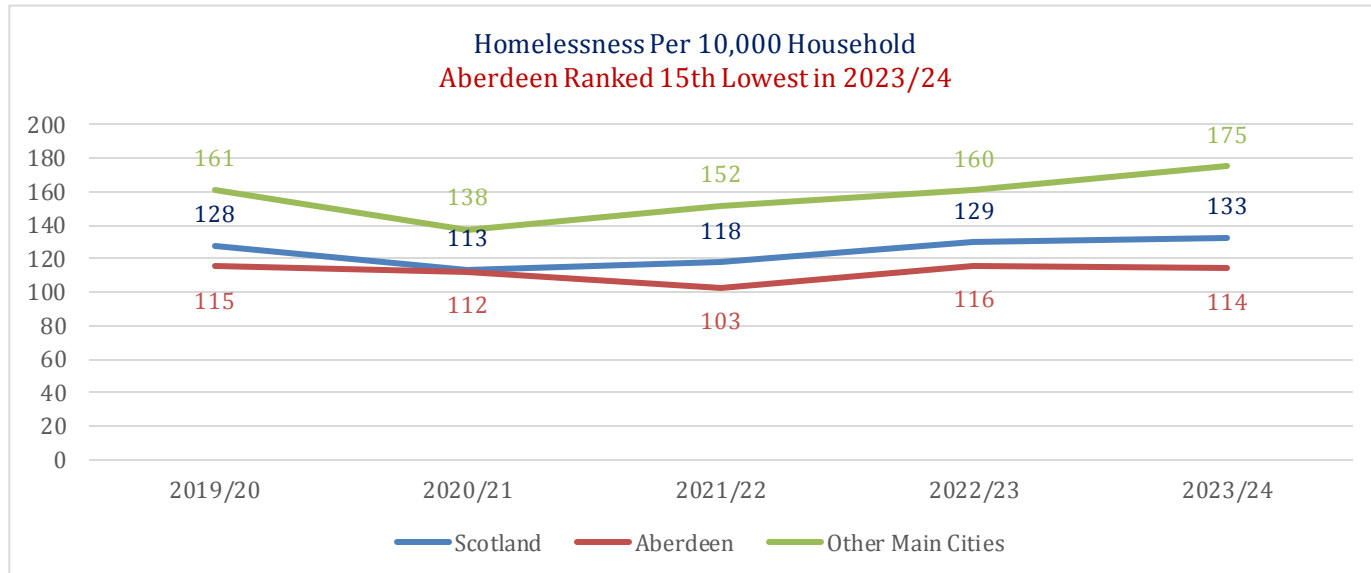
3.3. 1915 applicants nationally slept rough the night prior to their homeless application, up 28% on the previous year. Fourteen local authorities recorded reductions in this area with West Lothian seeing the highest numerical fall (-40) and Shetland the highest proportionate fall of 100%. East Renfrewshire recorded a 400% rise, the greatest of all the authorities. Aberdeen City were among six authorities to record no change. Aberdeen City accounted for 2.6% of all applications nationally who slept rough the night preceding application in 2023/24, lower than Dundee at 3.1%, Edinburgh at 12.1% and Glasgow at 33.4%. Aberdeen City data sits well below the national average as further illustrated in the graph below showing levels of rough sleeping in all local homeless applications.



3.4. In Aberdeen City, 8.6 applicants per 10,000 households were reported to have slept rough in the last 3 months, 3 lower than the national average of 11.6. Dundee (12.1), Edinburgh (17.1) and Glasgow (21.4) all reported higher levels than Aberdeen City. South Lanarkshire recorded the lowest levels of rough sleeping at 1.7 per 10,000 households. Midlothian, who appeared to have tackled and solved rough sleeping, reported their first incidences in over 5 years. There has been a rising national trend in this area since 2019/20, Aberdeen bucks this trend.

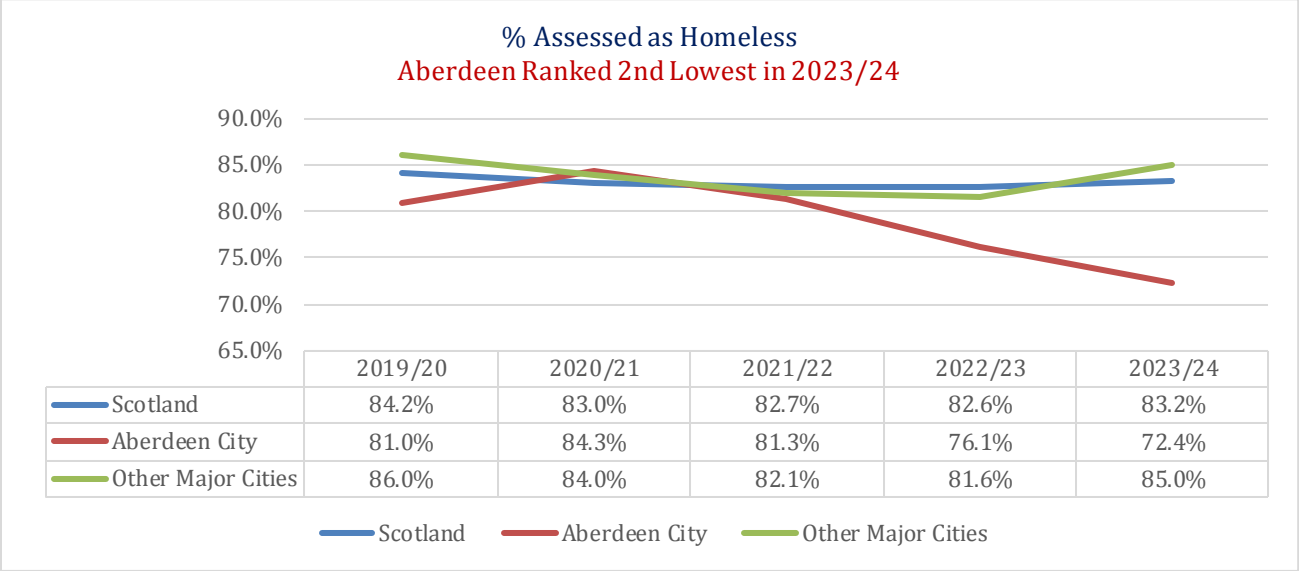


- 3.5. The number of households assessed as homeless across Scotland follows an upward trend (3% increase reported in 2023/24). Aberdeen is one of 14 local authorities to record a decline in levels of homelessness during the year. East Dunbartonshire recorded the sharpest fall at 24% and Aberdeenshire the 3rd sharpest fall at 18% (equivalent to 150 fewer homeless households). The Aberdeen City decline was small (0.3%) but outperformed Glasgow (+15%) Edinburgh (+1%) and Dundee (+1%) who all reported growth in levels of homelessness. Aberdeen City applications accounted for 4% of all new homeless cases in Scotland in 2023/24. This compares to 18% in Glasgow, 10% in Edinburgh and 3% in Dundee.
- 3.6 114 applicants per 10,000 households were found to be homeless across Aberdeen City in 2023/24, 19 lower than the national average of 133 and the lowest of all major cities – Dundee 157, Edinburgh 139 and Glasgow 208. Rates of homelessness however are more than double that of neighboring Aberdeenshire who have the second lowest level at 60.
- 3.7

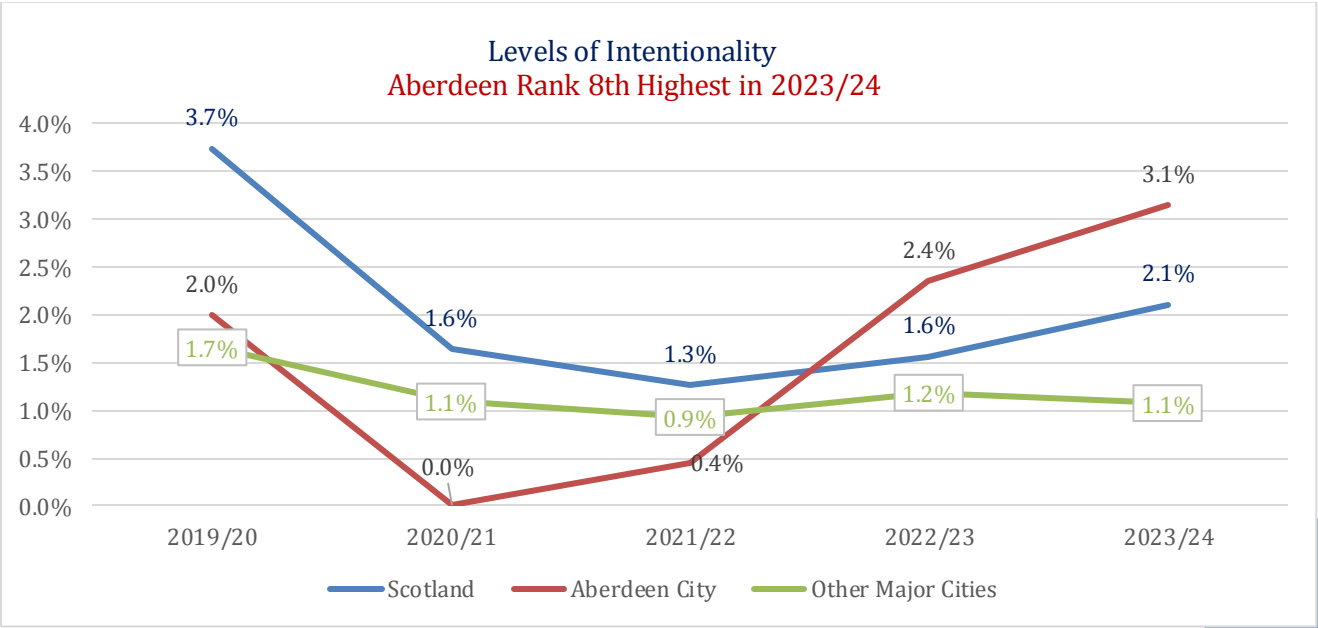


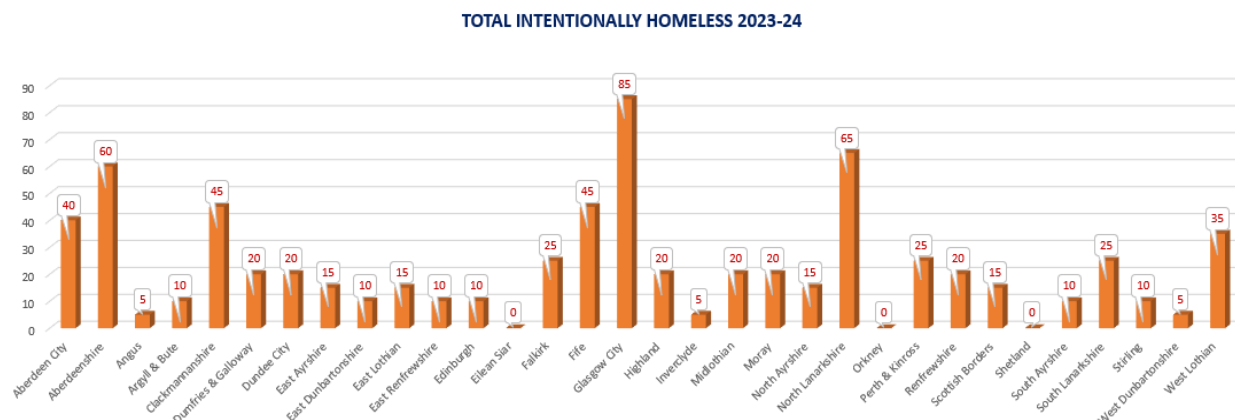
- 3.8 The number of children associated with a homeless household across Scotland fell by 7%, the first reduction reported in the last four years. After seeing an increase in 2022/23, Aberdeen City witnessed a 9% reduction in 2023/24 and was one of 22 authorities to record a fall. 59 less children in the city were associated with applications in 23/24 (equating to 3.8% of the number nationally). Levels are now broadly in line with those reported in the city in 2019/20.

3.9 Nationally, 83% of all applicants were assessed as being homeless during 2023/24, a rise of 1% when compared with the previous year. Applicants assessed as homelessness in Aberdeen City, however, fell to 72.4% (from 74% in 2022/23), 11 percentile points below the national average and the second lowest rate in the country behind Moray at 69%. Highland recorded the highest levels at 94%. There is a need to take time to understand why nearly 30% of avoidable demand is coming into the system to more fully to determine next steps.



3.10 Levels of intentionality (where a tenant deliberately does something, or fails to do something, that led to them losing their home) have declined sharply across Scotland in recent years, falling from 5.1% in 2017/18 to 2.1% last year. The fall is likely an unintended consequence of the change in legislation enacted in November 2019 that removed the duty to assess intentionality, instead replacing it with a power allowing local authorities to choose whether, or not they wish to assess intentionality. Over the last few years levels of intentionality in Aberdeen City have begun to climb, where the city has gone from having among the lowest rates of intentionality in 2020/21 at 0.4%, to among the highest last year at 3.1%. Clackmannanshire reported the highest levels of intentionality at 9.3% followed closely by Aberdeenshire at 8.6%. Eilean Siar, Shetland and Orkney reported no levels of intentionality. This rise needs to be better understood.



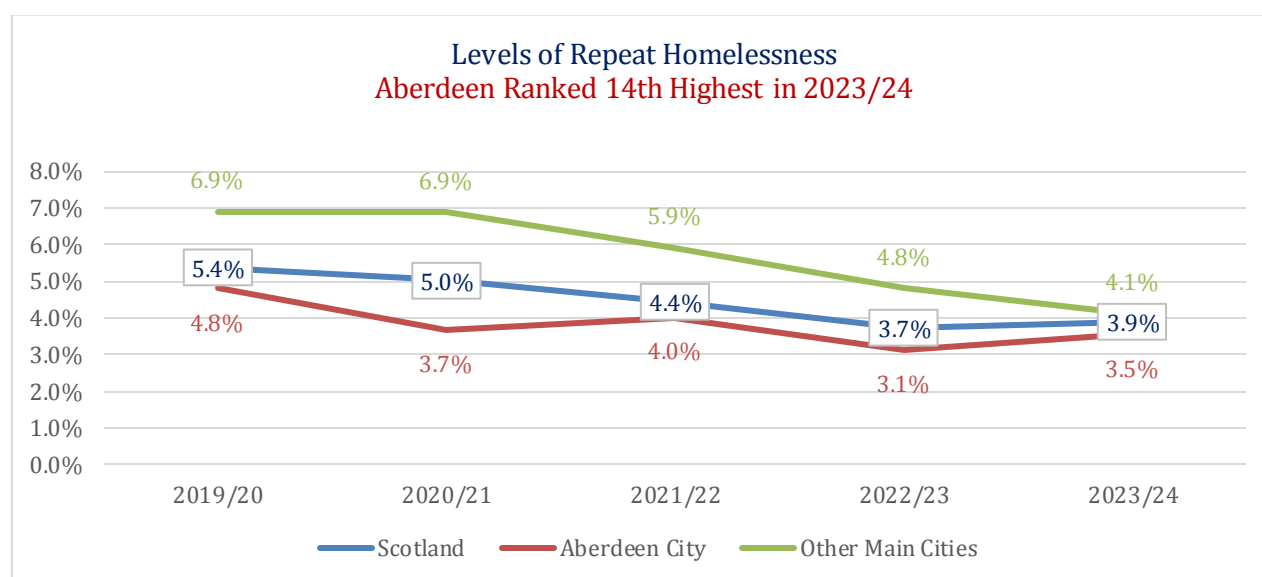


3.11 The majority of local authorities across Scotland reported falls in the number of statutory homeless households presenting with one or more support needs. At 38%, Aberdeen City were one of 14 local authorities to report a rise, however local levels remained significantly lower than the national average of 51% (and below Glasgow at 48% and Edinburgh at 53%). East Ayrshire reported the highest level of applicant need at 97%. In 2019/20, 65% of those assessed as homeless in the city had an identified support need, in 2023/24 this reduced to 38% and suggests that there may be work to do to ensure that support needs are accurately identified and appropriately supported. The 5 year reduction, despite known increases in mental health needs, has triggered a review of local arrangements and this has contributed to live data for 2024/25 showing a 47% increase. This work will be maintained suggest that there is a need to check that all support needs are appropriately recorded.



3.12 There has been an 18% increase in the number of households losing contact prior to decision across Scotland. In 2023/24 1510 households lost contact prior to decision, representing 3.8% of all applications assessed nationally (up 0.4% on the previous year). Aberdeen City has also seen an increase in lost contact decisions and at 5.1% recorded the 7th highest rate across Scotland and sit above the national average for the first time in 8 years. The only major city to eclipse Aberdeen's rate was Glasgow at 5.6%. Edinburgh was one of the best performers at 1% with Dundee coming in at 3%. East Ayrshire and Shetland reported no lost contacts and it would be helpful to understand their arrangements further to help reduce lost contacts locally.

- 3.13 The number of applicants who withdrew their application prior to decision fell nationally by 11% to 1511 in 2023/24, representing 3.7% of the total population assessed. At 8.3% Aberdeen City sit well above the national average and reported the third highest level behind North Ayrshire and East Ayrshire. Those making application in Aberdeen City are twice as likely to withdraw than the national average. There is a need to understand the journeys of those who withdraw their applications more fully to determine next steps and address this potentially avoidable demand.
- 3.14 Across Scotland, 715 households were assessed as ineligible for assistance in 2023/24, a fall of 15% compared with the previous year. The decline was driven by a 29% reduction in Glasgow and a 13% reduction in Edinburgh however these two authorities still account for over three quarters (545) of the national population assessed as ineligible. Aberdeen City continued to oversee a small increase and reported their highest levels since 2007/08. At 4.3% (75 of the 1,755 decisions reached) Aberdeen City saw the second highest level of ineligible applications behind Edinburgh at 9.4%. Glasgow and Dundee recorded 2.3% and 0.4% respectively. Of note in local data is the relatively high proportion of applications ineligible for assistance (over 4% of all local applications), this is considerably higher than the 1.7% recorded nationally, another example of potentially avoidable demand to be addressed.
- 3.15 Nationally, the number of households re-assessed as homeless within one year increased by 8% (1310). This led to a 0.2% rise in the levels of repeat homelessness in 2023/24 with 3.9% of all households assessed in Scotland having previously experienced homelessness within the last year. Numbers in Aberdeen City increased slightly (+5 applications), with rates climbing by 0.5%, however at 3.6% local data still falls below the national average of 3.9%. Levels in Aberdeen are higher than Edinburgh (1.8%) yet lower than Glasgow at 5.3% and Dundee at 4.5%. East Dunbartonshire, Midlothian, Orkney and Shetland all recorded no instances of repeat homelessness during the year. It would be helpful to understand approaches taken in those local authorities with few/no cases of repeat homelessness.



- 3.16 At 28% Aberdeen City have the second highest rate of no duty decisions reached across Scotland, sitting 11 percentage points above the national average of 17%. Only Moray (at 31%) reported higher levels. Rates in Glasgow and Dundee are 10% lower than Aberdeen City while Edinburgh is 15% lower. Aberdeen however are among the top 10 authorities for preventing homeless prior to decision which will impact upon the overall level of no duty decisions reached.

3.17 Conclusion:

Aberdeen City recorded the 13th highest rate of homelessness per 10,000 households at 158.8 (an improved position from last year when placed 11th), and is now slightly below the Scottish average. Levels of rough sleeping are lower than the national average and the other major cities. There are subtle differences in those cohort presenting as homeless in Aberdeen compared to other local authorities, resulting in relatively high rates of applicants who are only known to another local authority. This may be a factor in the relatively high rate of intentionality and number of applicants who the housing service lose contact with or who withdraw their application. Comparator data would suggest that support needs are not being fully recorded. The rate of applications where there is no statutory homeless duty is very high at 28%. There is a need to review how those seeking assistance are routed into the system to reduce levels of avoidable demand.

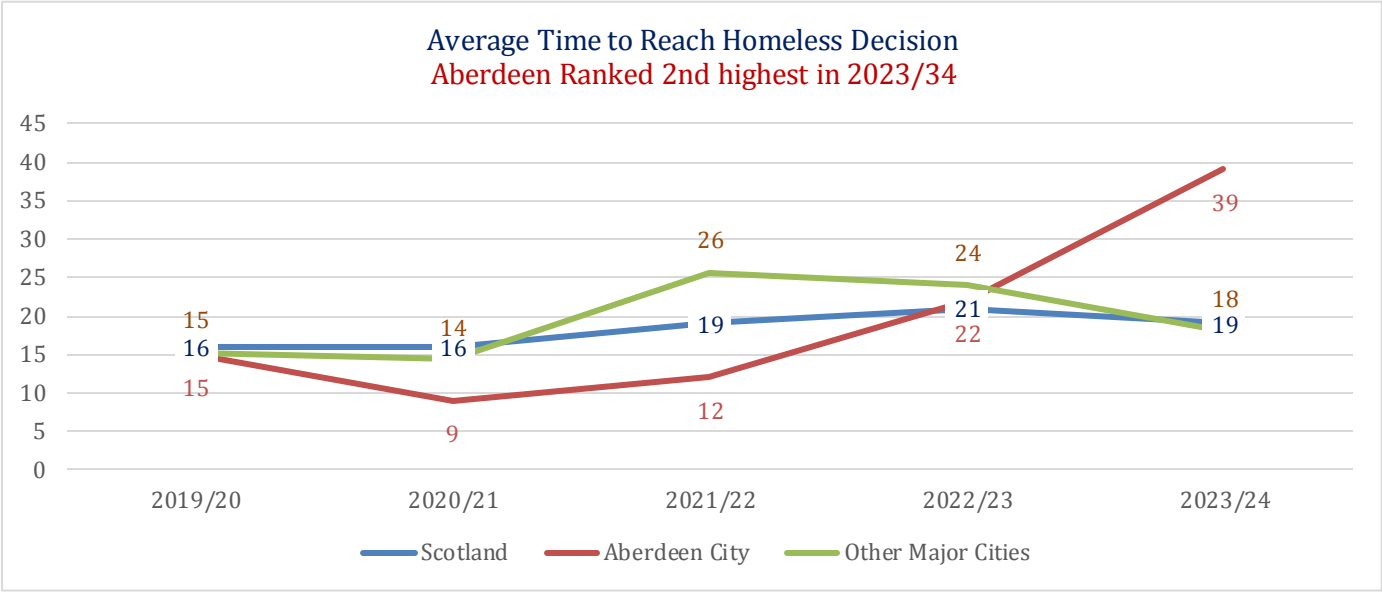
Early indications from local data for the first half of 2024/25 are encouraging with demands having plateaued and improvements being made against the number of households assessed with a statutory homeless duty increasing. The proportion found to have no statutory homeless duty has also fallen by 6%, where the number of ineligible households applying is at its lowest level in 3 years. A 9% rise in applicant need has also been witnessed with 47% of homeless households assessed as requiring support during this period. Rates of intentionality however continued to grow and will require continued focus. An emerging area of risk around rough sleeping is noted where numbers have more than doubled when compared with the same period the previous year.

3.17 Recommendations:

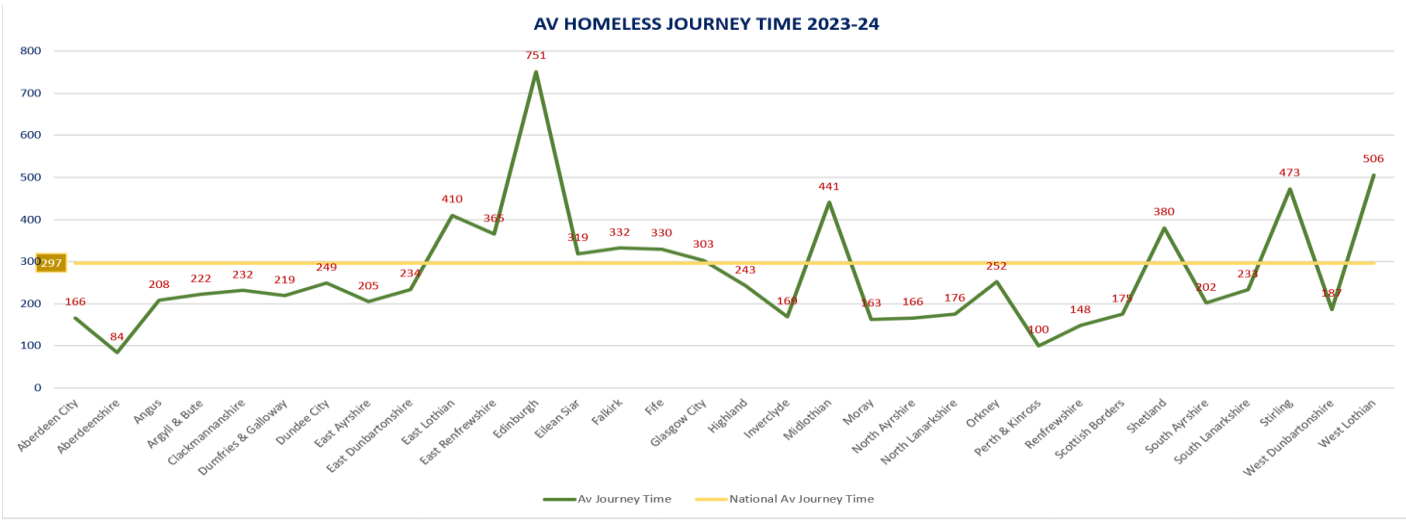
1. Map and better understand how those seeking assistance are routed into the homelessness system to see if there is greater scope for some of this negative demand to be prevented at an earlier stage, negating the need for a homeless application to be submitted.
2. Make contact with Edinburgh Council to understand their low levels of lost contacts, and with Dundee to understand their reduction in demand.
3. Undertake further analysis to understand if the relatively low level of support needs are as a result of the number of inappropriate homelessness applications and understand if this also influences the high number of applications withdrawn.

4. HOMELESS OUTCOMES

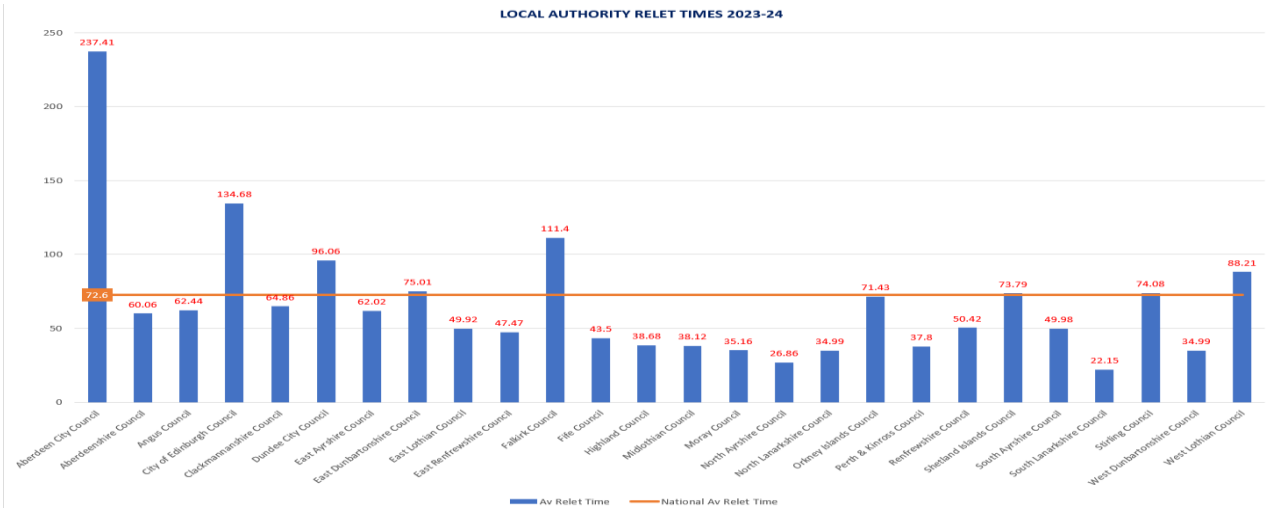
4.1. In 2020/21 Aberdeen City completed all statutory decisions within the 28-day timescale and posted the best average time of 9 days for reaching a statutory homeless decision, as of March 2024 this now sits at 39 days, the second highest behind East Renfrewshire at 51 days. Aberdeen City were among one of only four authorities to post an average decision time that was higher than the nationally recommended 28 days target in 2023/24, the others being East Renfrewshire, East Lothian and Shetland. There looks to be a corresponding increase in the number of no duty decisions reached where those who make application look elsewhere for a solution.



4.2. The increase in decision times, alongside an increase of 27 days in securing outcomes after a decision is made has adversely affected the average homeless journey in Aberdeen City (rose by 44 days to 166 in 2023/24). Despite this increase, the journey time achieved still far outperformed the national average of 297 days, which also increased slightly upon the previous year. Aberdeen City remain in the top quartile however fell two places posting the fifth quickest homeless journey time behind Aberdeenshire at 84 days, Perth & Kinross at 100 days, Renfrewshire at 148 days and Moray at 163 days. Furthermore, Aberdeen City outperformed the other major cities in this area with Edinburgh operating at 751 days (the longest of all authorities), Glasgow at 303 days and Dundee at 249 days.

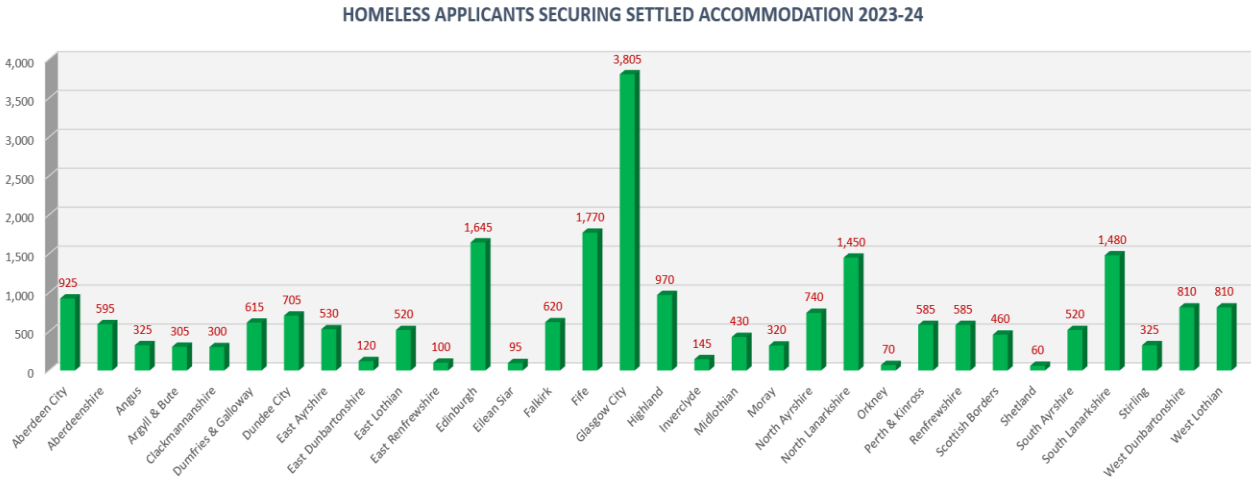


4.3. The average time taken to re-let a void property in 2023/24 was 237 days (the highest in Scotland) and significantly higher than the four other authorities with lower homeless journey times (177 more than Aberdeenshire, 199 more than Perth & Kinross, 187 more than Renfrewshire and 202 days more than Moray). There is a need to continue our focus on void properties.

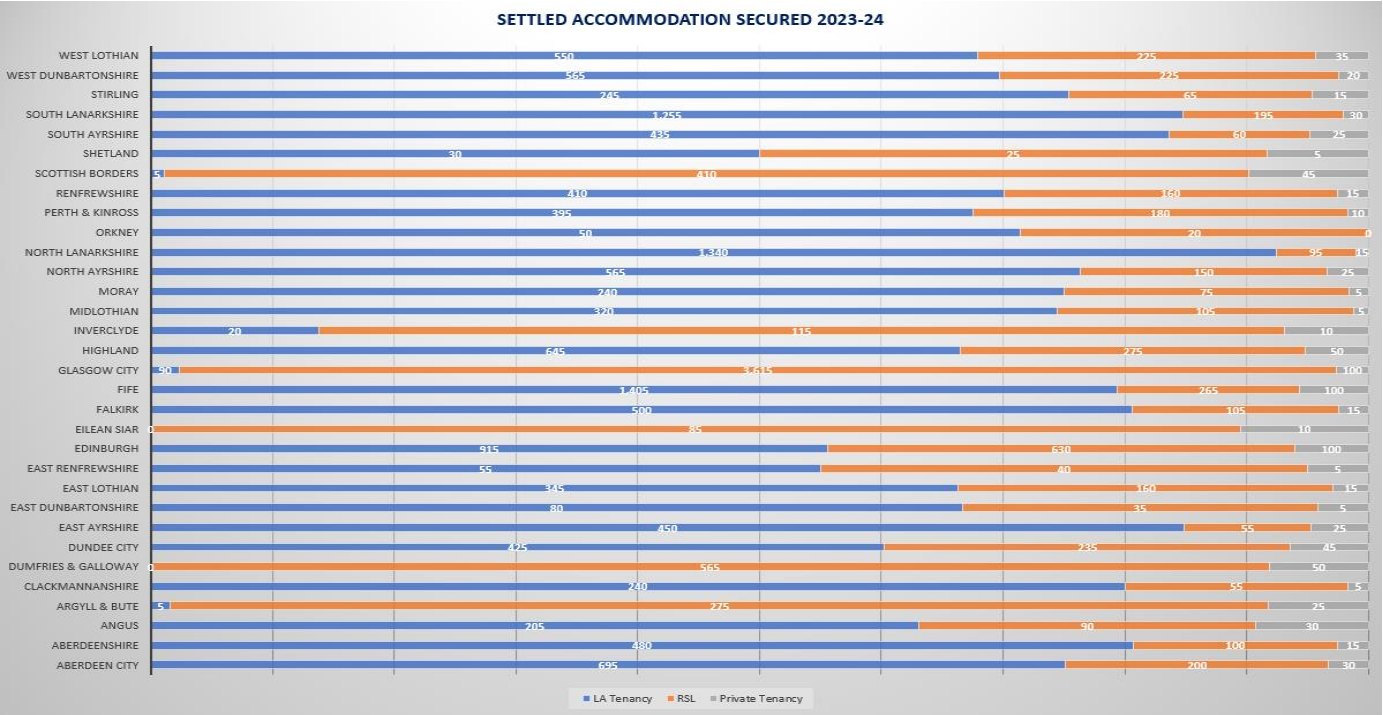


4.4. Across Scotland, 31,423 statutory homeless households secured an outcome in 2023/24, up 9% (2651) on the previous year. However, during the year homeless demand grew to 33,619, outstripping case closures by 9%. All but six local authorities, including Aberdeen City, recorded a negative co-efficient. Owing to this there was an 8% (2462) increase in the number of live homeless applications across Scotland on 31st March 2024 compared with the same period the previous year. Cases in Inverclyde more than doubled where they experienced the greatest proportional rise in 2023/24. Aberdeen City reported a 15% increase, much lower than the 67% recorded the previous year, however were still one of 19 authorities to record a rise in open cases. While there has been significant growth in the number of live homeless cases in Aberdeen City over the last 2 years, the 678 reported at 31st of March 2023 is still far less than Dundee - 834, Edinburgh - 7,067, and Glasgow – 6,240. At 61 live cases per 10,000 households Aberdeen City has the fifth lowest level across Scotland. Aberdeenshire has the lowest rate at 16. Aberdeenshire did however oversee the biggest downturn in 2023/24 with a 33% reduction in live cases reported.

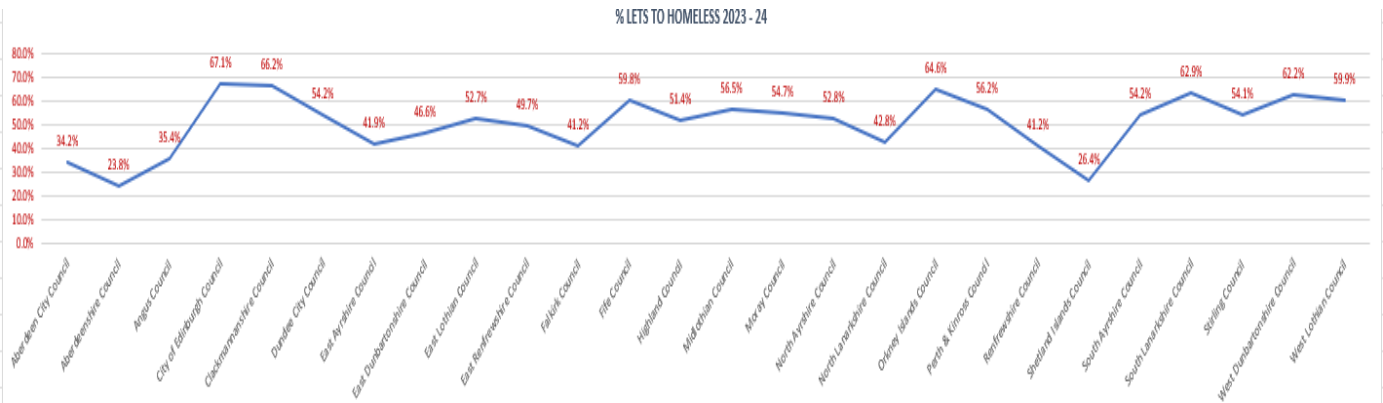
4.5. The number of households with a rehouse duty maintaining contact and securing settled accommodation in Aberdeen City increased to 83%, up six percentage points on the previous year and now on par with the national average. Compared to the other major cities, only Glasgow reported a lower rate of 77%, with Edinburgh and Dundee reporting 86% and 85% respectively.



4.6. Aberdeen City is among five local authorities heavily reliant on use of its own stock for rehousing homeless households where in 2023/24, 75% of all settled accommodation outcomes secured were LA Tenancy, significantly higher than the 57% national average. In stark contrast the proportion of applicants securing RSL accommodation in Aberdeen City was 22%, far lower than the 39% national average. There is a need to work to secure higher levels of accommodation for the homeless households from RSLs.

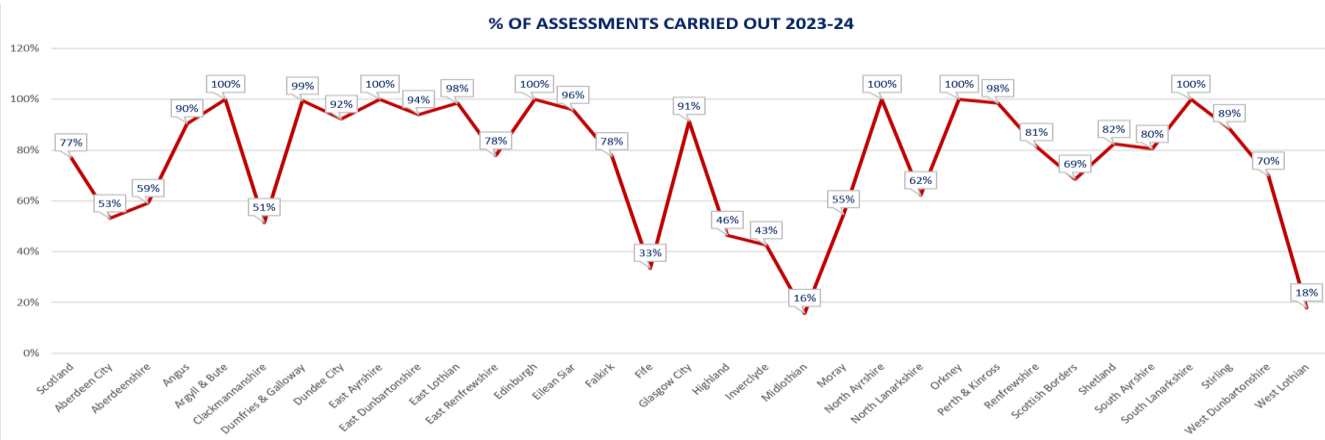


4.7. Of the 26 local authorities with housing stock, Aberdeen City relet 2123 properties in 2023/24 (the third highest rate behind North Lanarkshire and Fife). Despite the higher levels of turnover, at 34%, allocation rates to homeless households in Aberdeen City were lower than the national average of 54% and the third lowest across all 26 authorities. Aberdeen City however did allocate the highest number of supported properties for which few homeless households qualify. The on-going need to maintain properties for those fleeing conflict and those impacted by RAAC is likely to be impacting this data.

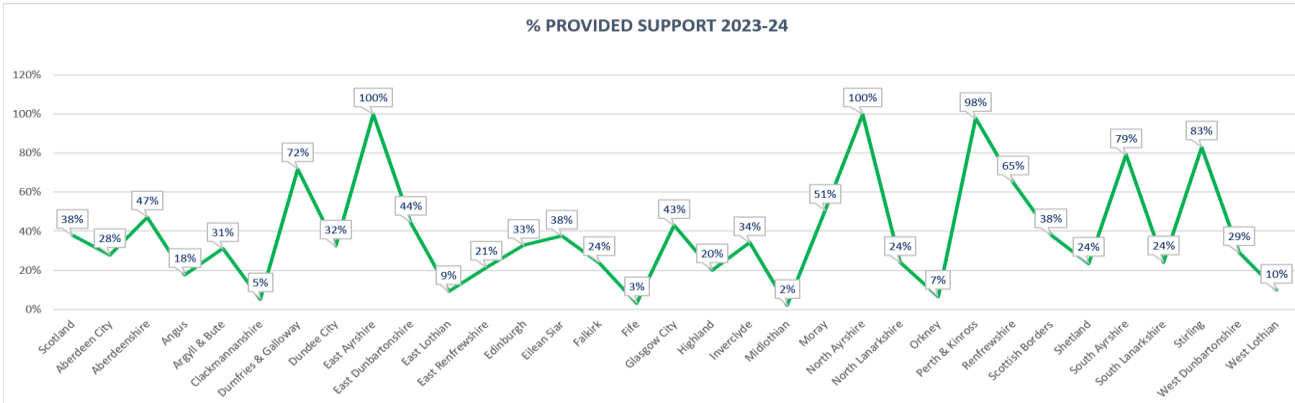


Allocation policies, homeless applicant profile, stock size and type will differ across Scotland. This should be borne in mind when interpreting these figures at the local authority level.

- 4.8. For the fifth successive year the number of households with a rehouse duty who maintained contact and secured accommodation in the private rented sector fell. In 2023/24 3.9% of all homeless households permanently rehoused across Scotland secured a private let. Rates in Aberdeen City were slightly lower at 3.2% and lower than Edinburgh (6.1%) and Dundee (6.4%) yet slightly higher than Glasgow (2.6%).
- 4.9. Levels of homeless tenancy sustainment in Aberdeen City increased slightly to 86.7% in 2023/24, up 0.7% but still lower than the national average of 89.5%. While their ranking position did improve, Aberdeen City still rank among the seven lowest performing local authorities behind Shetland (76.9). Aberdeenshire (81.2%), North Ayrshire (84.0%), Dundee (84.8%), East Ayrshire (84.8%), Perth & Kinross (85.5%) and Renfrewshire (86.5%). Midlothian reported the highest levels at 97.3%.
- 4.10. Lower levels of tenancy sustainment in Aberdeen City might be impacted by the lower rate of support assessments being carried out. In 2023/24, 53% of statutory homeless applicants securing an outcome in 2023/24 were assessed, the 7th lowest across Scotland and far below the national average of 77%.



The proportion assessed and who received support was much lower at 28%, yet was higher than some other authorities who proportionally undertook more assessments. North Ayrshire and East Ayrshire both assessed and provided support to all statutory homeless households that maintained contact and secured an outcome.



4.10 **Conclusion:**

Aberdeen City has the fifth lowest level of live cases across Scotland. The average time taken to reach a statutory homeless decision in Aberdeen City has risen to 39 days in 2023/24, well above the statutory recommended 28 days. The increase in decision times has adversely affected the homeless journey time, as has the time taken to secure an outcome post decision. Many areas can affect the journey time post decision however the two key areas driving the increase in 2023/24 were high void times and higher levels of deferred homeless applications and work should continue to address these areas. Aberdeen City is heavily reliant on use of its own stock for rehousing homeless households where in 2023/24, 75% of all settled accommodation outcomes secured were LA Tenancy, significantly higher than the 57% national average. There is also a need to engage with RSLs to explore what more they might be able to do to contribute to improved outcomes for those presenting as homeless. Levels of homeless tenancy sustainment in Aberdeen City increased slightly to 86.7% in 2023/24, up 0.7% but still lower than the national average of 89.5%.

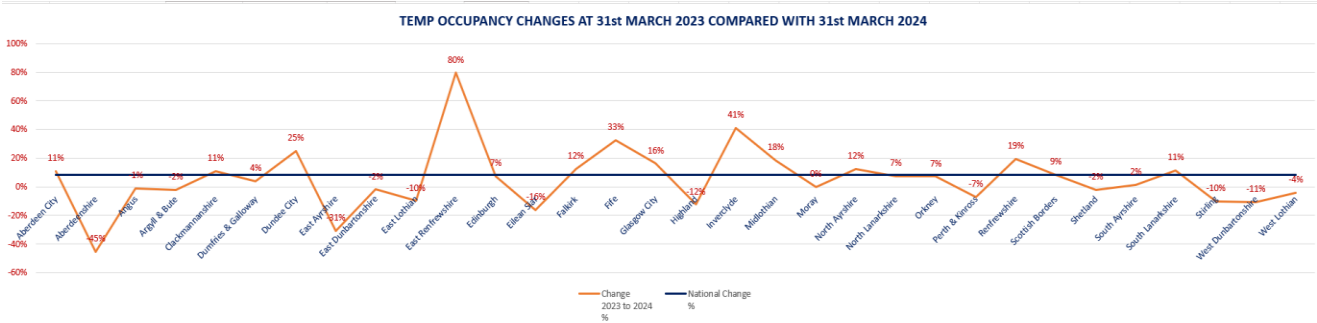
Early indications from local data for the first half of 2024/25 are encouraging where decision times have fallen by 5 days and the number meeting the 28 day target has risen by 10%. Homeless case closure rates are also up 47% and now outstrip new levels of demand which has led to a 13% reduction in applicants waiting to be rehoused. This has led to accelerated outcomes for homeless households where the average homeless journey time has reduced to 141 days. A 63% increase in ACC lets to homeless households during this period appears to be driving the improvements.

4.11 **Recommendations:**

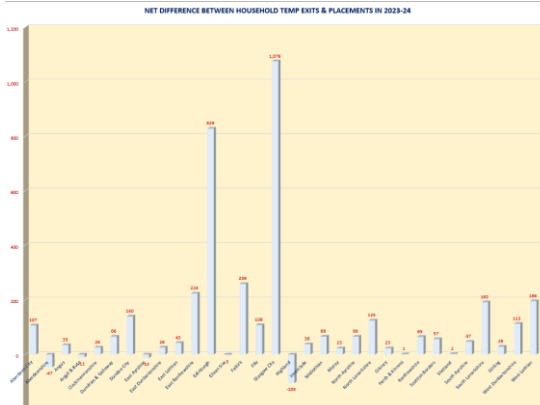
4. Continued focus on monitoring data through the recently published data dashboard at operational and strategic level to help secure continuous improvement in both voids and journey times.
5. Continue to progress work to develop an Asset Plan to ensure that the housing stock we need to support those presenting as homeless is available in the longer term.
6. Continued monitoring and review of deferred applications as to reasons why deferred and solutions to make the applications live on the housing system wherever appropriate.
7. Ensuring RSLs are fulfilling their commitment to providing 50% of allocations to homeless households across the city.

5. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

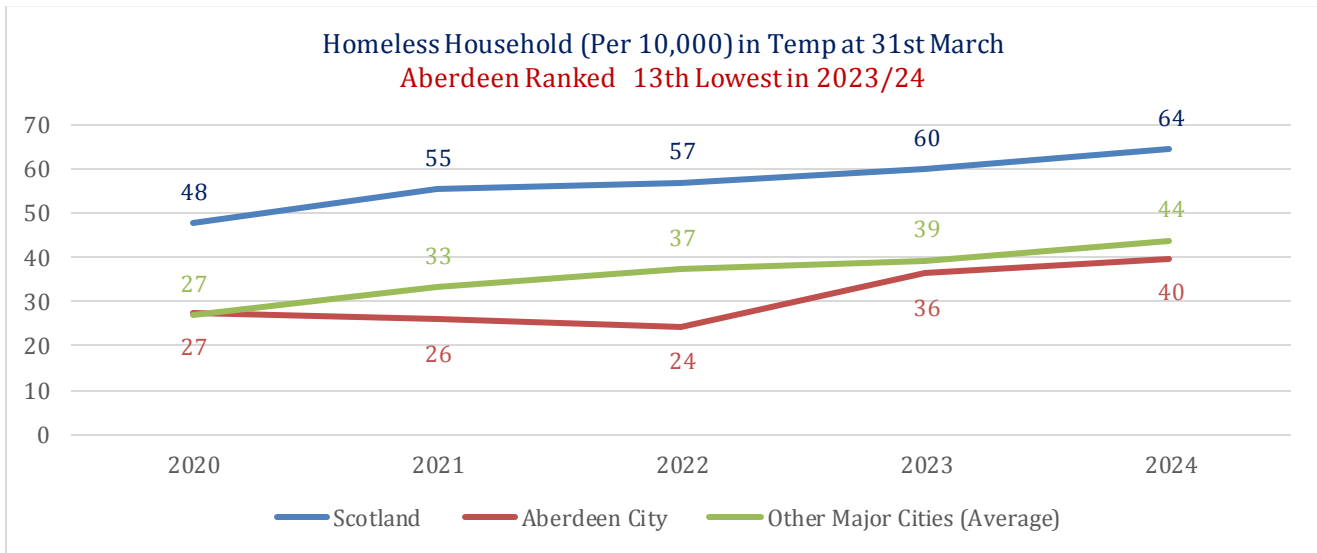
5.1 On the 31st of March 2024 there were 16,330 homeless households accommodated in temporary accommodation across Scotland, a 9% increase upon the same time the previous year and the highest levels recorded since records began in 2002. During the period, 18 local authorities experienced an upturn in the number of households accommodated, with Aberdeen City recording the 10th sharpest increase of 11% (+43), slightly higher than the national average of 9%. East Renfrewshire reported the largest proportionate rise of 80% whereas Glasgow saw the largest numerical rise with 520 (+16%) more households accommodated. Edinburgh experienced a 7% increase and Dundee a 25% increase.



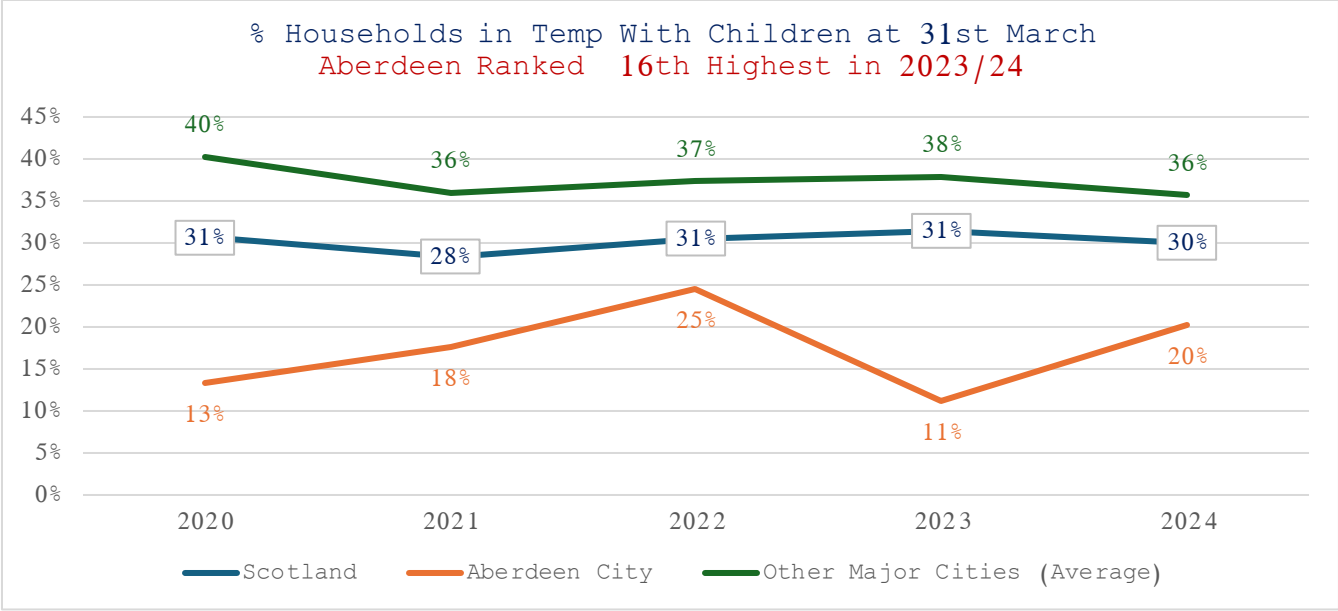
5.2 The rise in numbers accommodated in temporary accommodation was driven not only by increases in demand but also a slowdown in households moving out of temporary accommodation. Across Scotland there were 3803 (19%) more households placed in temp than were exiting. Aberdeen City reported a 10% differential which was lower than the national average and all other major cities – Edinburgh 36%, Glasgow 21% and Dundee 18%.



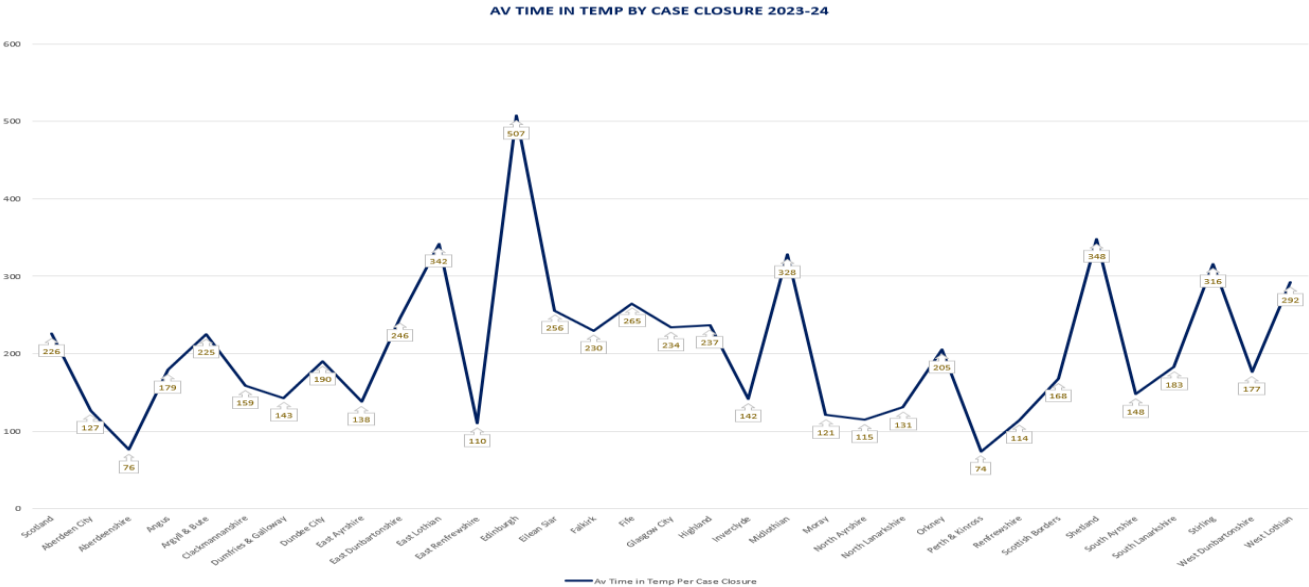
5.3 Per 10,000 households the number accommodated in temporary accommodation across Scotland on the 31st of March 2024 was representative to 64. The ratio accommodated in Aberdeen City was much lower at 40 and is the 13th lowest of all authorities and significantly lower than Glasgow (125), Edinburgh (158) and Dundee (65). Aberdeenshire reported the lowest rate of 6.



5.4 30% (4910) of all households accommodated in temporary accommodation across Scotland had dependent children. In comparison, rates in Aberdeen City were much lower at 20%, however, the city did see a significant increase in children accommodated in temporary accommodation when compared with the same period the previous year. Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee all had higher rates than Aberdeen City at 32%, 40%, and 24% respectively.



5.5 The average time households spend in temporary accommodation (across all placements throughout the life of the application) increased by 3 days to 226 in 2023/24. Just under a half (14) of all local authorities recorded a rise in household durations with Aberdeen City seeing the 2nd highest incline of 27 days. Edinburgh recorded the sharpest rise of 78 days.

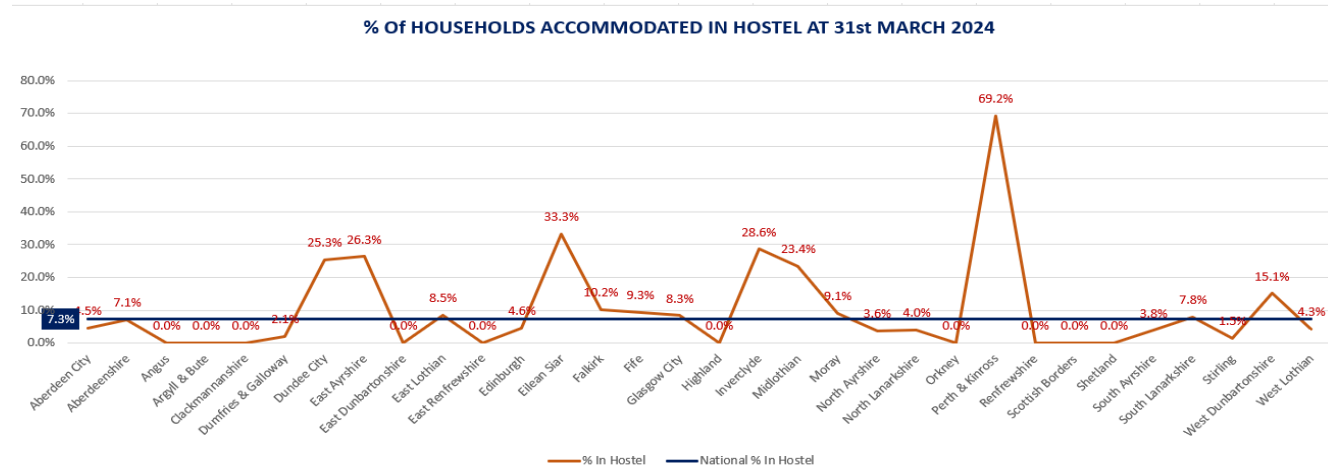


5.6 The average time of 127 days posted by Aberdeen City is still 99 days better than the national average and ranks 7th quickest of all authorities. Perth & Kinross at 74 days, Aberdeenshire at 76 days, Renfrewshire at 114 days and Moray at 121 days are included within this top group all of whom reported better homeless journey times than Aberdeen City. Aberdeen City far outperforms the other three major

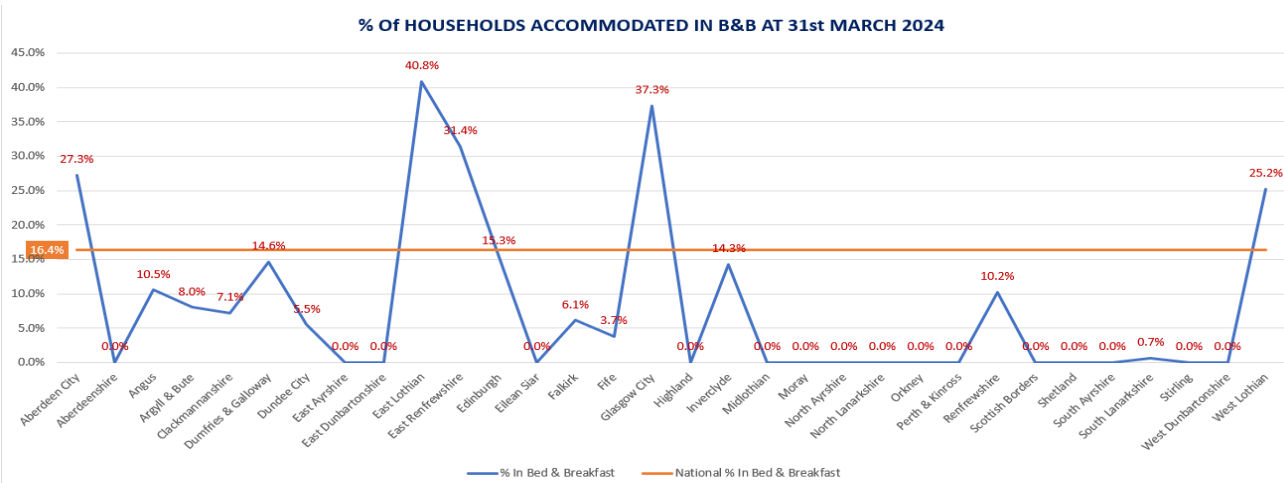
cities where the average time spent in temporary accommodation is 63 days shorter than Dundee (190), 107 fewer than Glasgow (234) and 380 fewer than Edinburgh (507).

5.7 A key rapid rehousing priority is providing temporary accommodation that is mainstream, furnished and set within the community. For many local authorities with stock, providing sufficiently furnished temporary council accommodation is key to meeting this. On the 31st of March 2024, 39% of households across Scotland were accommodated in this type. Of the households accommodated in Aberdeen City, 69% were accommodated in this type, down 2% on the previous year yet higher than the national average. In 2021/22 only two other local authorities, Orkney & Clackmannanshire, had a higher rate of households accommodated in this type than Aberdeen City, yet two years on there are now fifteen with higher rates.

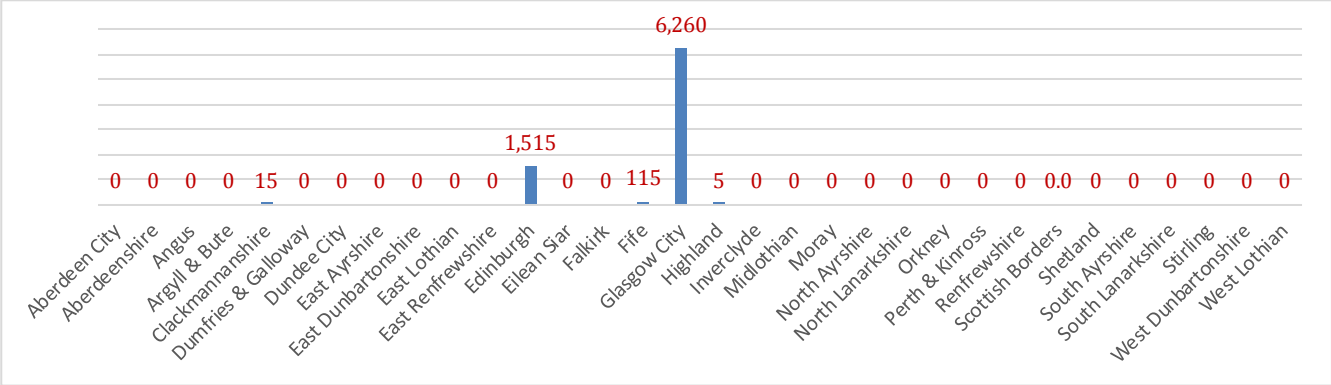
5.8 Snapshot in time data at the 31st March 2024 suggests that only five Local Authorities have been able to eradicate the use of both Hostel and Bed & Breakfast accommodation, the types most likely to be considered unsuitable in accordance with The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 – Orkney, Shetland, Highland, Scottish Borders, and East Dumbartonshire.



5.9 The data further suggests that half of all local authorities have ceased using Bed & Breakfast to temporarily house homeless households. Aberdeen City is one of 16 authorities to still be using B&B whereupon at 31st March 2024, 27% of all placements were accommodated in this type. Proportionally only Glasgow, East Lothian and East Renfrewshire recorded higher B&B placement levels. Most placements were in Edinburgh (585) and Glasgow (1390) accounting for almost three quarters of all such placements across Scotland.



- 5.10 A total of 7400 breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order were recorded across Scotland in 2023/24. Due to review and clarity in recording, more local authorities than ever reported breaches in the year with Glasgow recording the most at 2990, equivalent to 40% of all reported. Edinburgh reported 1525 (21%) and together with Glasgow contribute to 61% of all breaches reported. Aberdeen City recorded their highest levels on record and the 540 reported was the third highest of all authorities.
- 5.11 A total of 7915 homeless households across Scotland were not offered temporary accommodation at time of application and denied their legal right of access, a 1659% increase on the previous year. Glasgow (79%) and Edinburgh (19%) were worst affected and attributable for 88% of all incidences. Aberdeen City were one of nine other authorities to report a very small amount.



Conclusion:

Use of hotels in Aberdeen City were commissioned as a short term option to provide accommodation on an emergency basis, however, overtime this has become a more medium term option with average placement times rising from 9 days in 2022/23 to 45 days in 2023/34. The increase subsequently led to 540 breaches of The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 being reported in the year, the highest level on record. While hotels continue to be used there remains significant compliance risk.

Over the last two years an additional 100 furnished flatted units have been incorporated into temporary stock. This has helped reduce hotel use where recent records show occupancy levels are now operating at between 65-75 at any given time, however placement times do continue to increase. Despite more temporary furnished flatted units being made available, void rates among this type have risen and now persistently remain high at around 20% - 25%. The average time taken to let a temporary flat off the homeless void path has increased from 28 days in 2018/19 to 54 days in 2023/24

Early indications from local data for the first half of 2024/25 are encouraging. Temporary accommodation turnover rates have increased by 5% seeing more households leaving temporary accommodation than entering. This has led to a decline in temp occupancy levels, where a snapshot of homeless households accommodated at end of the first half 2024/25 indicates a 13% decline in occupancy rates when compared with year end 2023/24 (-58). The number of households accommodated in hotel has also fallen by 45%.

Recommendations:

- 8. Continue to implement the action plan to reduce the use of temporary accommodation.
- 9. Quicker turnaround of void temp flats.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities Housing and Public Protection
DATE	27 th May 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Viability Assessment of Proposals from Owners of Properties with RAAC
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/25/124
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth/Jacqui McKenzie/Jonathan Belford
REPORT AUTHOR	Stephen Booth/Jacqui McKenzie/Jonathan Belford
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the reconvened Council meeting of 17th February 2025 ([F&C/25/030](#)), the Council noted the alternative options proposed by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee and instructed officers to explore the feasibility, benefits and risks associated with each option, alongside any other identified opportunities to support owners, and report the findings to a future meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee. This report shares the outcome of a Viability Assessment undertaken and makes recommendations for consideration by Committee.
- 1.2 The Report also takes account of the instruction to consider the landscaping options outlined in [CR&E/25/057](#) more fully when reporting back to Committee on the viability of the alternative options presented by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee (TRCG).

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Thank the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee (TRCG) and UK RAAC Campaign Group for their positive engagement in the process of identifying alternative options for owners and for granting permission to share the note of engagement via Appendix A with the Committee;
- 2.2 Note the contents of the Viability Assessment contained in Appendix B and that the purpose of the review was to determine if there are additional options which would meet the Council's overall objectives;

- 2.3 Note that Options 2, 3 and 4 in the Report are all identified by officers as being viable and worth investigating further with all owners;
- 2.4 Note that TRCG have expressed a view that any option which involves owners contributing to costs or sharing equity in their property will not be acceptable to them;
- 2.5 Note that if Option 3 is pursued there will require to be a commitment from all owners within any identified terraces of properties and that there will be a requirement to vacate properties timeously as part of the overall agreement in order to mitigate the health and safety risks;
- 2.6 Note the previous decisions that Voluntary Acquisition will be at Market Value (with additional supporting payments as previously agreed) and agree that all options should be equitable in so far as no single option will be more financially beneficial than any other to owners;
- 2.7 Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to write to all homeowners to advise them of the alternative options presented, in keeping with the officer modelling within Appendix B, and ask homeowners, having considered the information, to formally identify by the end of June 2025 which option they would be willing to consider; and:

In relation to the roof on roof off proposal (Option 3):

- a) Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, in consultation with the Chief Officers of Finance, Housing and Capital, to thereafter review terraces on the site which would best lend themselves to meeting demand for the roof on roof off option as indicated by owners;
- b) Instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to progress negotiations with owners to deliver the option as identified in the Viability Assessment and enter into legal agreements as required if there is sufficient interest to undertake this option in relation to at least one full terrace where all owners are in agreement;
- c) Approve the necessary spend, using the funding solution identified for voluntary acquisition, to undertake works as identified in the Viability Assessment including procuring works, supplies and services as required in accordance with the Council's Procurement Regulations;
- d) Instruct the Chief Officer – Finance to explore the options in relation to loan, standard securities and shared equity mechanisms to support owners to meet a share of costs as outlined in the Viability Assessment in connection with their properties;
- e) Instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to instruct the disposal of properties to owners as identified in the Viability Assessment, where this is considered appropriate;

In relation to the excambion (house swap) option (Option 4):

- f) Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Housing to identify Council houses that may be appropriate for excambion, prepare property information on these and circulate details to interested owners;
 - g) Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Governance to arrange any necessary works to properties under existing delegated powers and conclude transactions in relation to this Option in accordance with the terms contained within the Viability Assessment;
 - h) Approve the use of the existing funding solution for voluntary acquisition to fund these works, including making payment to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the loss of housing stock (all at Market Value);
 - i) Instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to keep the Scottish Housing Regulator advised of progress with this work;
- 2.8 Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to progress negotiations with owners, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Finance, and report back on progress to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in August 2025 within the already scheduled report;
- 2.9 Note that the first proposal within the UK RAAC Campaign Group Option is assessed as unviable, but that the remaining proposals have been built into the roof off/roof on proposal from the TRCG;
- 2.10 Note that works to masterplan the site have been ‘stepped down’ until July 2025 to ensure clarity over the options being taken forward in this report, as have works to progress site landscaping and demolition to avoid abortive costs;
- 2.11 Instruct the Chief Officers of Finance, Housing and Corporate Landlord to continue to pursue all available funding options to meet the needs of the Council and owners; and
- 2.12 Instruct the Chief Officers of Finance, Housing and Corporate Landlord to discuss the content of this report formally with External Audit to confirm that they have no objections to the Value for Money of the recommendations within this report.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Following the decision noted in para 1.1, a period of shared planning between the TRCG and senior Council officers was undertaken, culminating in a workshop being held on the 12th March 2025 at Greyhope Community Hub. The Workshop was ably facilitated by colleagues in Community Learning and Development.
- 3.2 The workshop was co-designed with the TRCG to help owners and Council officers develop a shared understanding of the pros and cons of the two [options](#) presented by the local Group. An agreed account of the highly productive workshop is included in Appendix A and shared with the permission of the Group.

- 3.3 Council officers have since taken forward the actions agreed at the workshop and have fully considered the feasibility of the options presented by the TRCG. This has included discussing the Options with the Scottish Housing Regulator who has advised that they are content with Option 4, so long as the Council is able to demonstrate that the disposal of any properties would be in the wider interests of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 3.4 Following a period of further planning with the TRCG, officers again met the Group on 29th April 2025 to share the outcome of their on-going assessment of Viability. This second workshop gave officers a chance to feedback on the actions from the first meeting and share how officers believed that the two options could be deemed viable when all constraints had been taken into account. An account of the second workshop is available in Appendix A, with comments provided thereafter by the Group included at the end of the Note.
- 3.5 A further proposal, with subsequent clarifications through e-mail, was presented by the UK RAAC Campaign Group (included as an Appendix to the Viability Assessment). This option has also been considered (referred to as Option 5), with the additional suggestions for the options presented by the Local Group taken into account wherever possible.
- 3.6 The first submission from the UK RAAC Group was discounted as it does not take account of decisions already taken by Council with regard to Council owned properties. In addition Members will be aware that opportunities are available to home owners for environmental retrofit that are not available to the Council, leading to environmental retrofit also being considered out of scope for this Viability Assessment as it would not deliver best value for the Council. Following positive engagement with the UK RAAC Group, a slightly amended proposal was tabled and this has been used to inform the development of the Roof Replacement Option (Option 3).

The additional options explored

- 3.7 **Roof Replacement Option** (shown in the Viability Assessment as Option 3)
In its simplest form, owners would like the Council to consider ringfencing part of the site (approx. 50 of the 372 buildings) and removing the RAAC roofs from these properties and replacing them with a new timber cassette roof. Those residents interested could then be allocated one of these properties and be able to remain in the community.
- 3.8 **House excambion (swap) Option** (Option 4 in the Viability Assessment)
Owners have asked the Council to consider whether they would be prepared to offer owners the opportunity to swap their property with an existing Council property (which they would then be the owners of) with a like for like value (or with a balancing payment). The current Market Value of each property would be used.
- 3.9 **Owners be given low cost (or no cost) loans/grants to remove RAAC and linked Council properties are not demolished** (shown as Option 5)
Owners be given low cost (or no cost) loans/grants to remove RAAC, and that the Council commission and coordinate roof replacements, including to Council

properties linked to privately owned homes. Work to include improved energy efficiency and external rendering at the expense of owners would be included as part of these works. An alternative proposal akin to the Roof Replacement Option was also presented. These proposals were merged to form the Roof Replacement Option (Option 3).

- 3.10 For completeness a review of the current option of voluntary acquisition is included in the Viability Assessment as is the impact of 'do-nothing' to allow members of the Committee the opportunity to consider the options on a wider basis.
- 3.11 The proposals have been reviewed and analysed, taking into account factors such as the impact on owners, community, buildability, commercial, legal and financial impact. Other considerations around the practicability of delivery and future property allocations were also considered.

Approach to undertaking the Viability Assessment

- 3.12 The health and safety of those living in RAAC affected properties remains a primary concern for both the Council and owners and as a result must be a key consideration. For an option to be viable, it also needs to enable the delivery of decisions already taken by Council. It is also important to recognise that the Council's role in relation to privately owned property is limited by law.
- 3.13 The Council has sought to engage positively with affected owners to explore the options presented. Officers note that owners believe that all costs should be met by the Council. The Council cannot accept open-ended financial liability for circumstances arising from private ownership. Any support that is proposed to be offered to private owners requires to be funded, and as such the provision of support to owners will directly impact on the population of Aberdeen through a reduction in the provision of services or planned capital works, and/or costs passed to Council Tax payers for example. This does not mean that the Council cannot provide support, but does mean that the Council has a duty to act equitably, responsibly, and in line with its statutory powers. As a result, officers have considered how any proposals to support homeowners could impact on the wider population and attempted to strike an appropriate balance.
- 3.14 Having considered the objectives for the Council and also for owners, criteria were agreed with the TRCG. Officers and the Group have separately assessed each option against the following 5 criteria to help determine the strength and therefore the viability of options.
- quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners
 - mitigate financial loss to owners
 - enable masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock
 - mitigate the financial costs to Aberdeen City Council, domestic rate payers and the Housing Revenue Account
 - be deliverable (to include practicalities and availability of suitably qualified personnel to oversee works etc.

- 3.15 Appendix B sets out the full findings of our Viability Assessment on the proposals presented by the TRCG and the UK RAAC Campaign Group. Risks particular to each of the Options are articulated in the Appendix. Officers have concluded that Option 1 (do nothing) remains unviable at this time.
- 3.16 Officers conclude that Option 2 (Voluntary Acquisition) remains viable at this time.
- 3.17 In order to make Option 3 equitable, comply with best value principles and therefore be viable, it is proposed that each owner is asked to make a contribution to the costs of this Option by funding the costs of the actual roof replacement. It is proposed that this would be capped at the 'discount' made to arrive at the Market Value of the property as determined by the Valuation Office Agency. It should be noted that this is less than the cost estimates prepared by the Council's professional team but is being used for transparency and consistency with other options.

Type of Property	Number	RAAC Deduction	Total Deduction
1 bed ground	18	*20k	£360k
1 bed first floor	19	*20k	£380k
3 bed	86	37k	£3,182k
4 bed	15	44k	£660k
	138		£4,582k

*1 bed properties have a larger roof area/ costs split between parties.

- 3.18 Through the viability assessment process, and particularly through engagement with the TRCG, many owners have highlighted the considerable financial challenges presented by the identification of RAAC in their properties. It has become clear that very few owners will be willing (or able) to pay upfront costs for roof replacement. Recognising the difficulty of some owners in meeting costs for the replacement roof on an upfront basis, it is proposed that the following mechanism be considered for owners to meet their share of costs:
- Owners meet costs on completion of works
 - Owners are offered a loan by the council to pay for their contribution towards the works (loan would be secured against the property – 2nd ranking).
 - Owners who are unable to meet the cost will instead be asked to contribute through shared equity in the property.
- 3.19 In return for the owners covering the costs associated with the actual roof replacement, it is proposed that the Council meet all other reasonable and demonstrable costs to include the following with exceptions subject to consideration on a case by case basis:
- Project management costs
 - Legal costs (insofar as properly and reasonably incurred)
 - Removal and storage costs
 - Property re-instatement costs
 - Statutory consents
 - Schedule of works/ condition
 - Deep clean
 - Safety checks (and works that may come from checks)
 - Cost to take vacant properties to the Council's minimum letting standard

- Mortgage/ security costs (process costs for variations etc.)
- Managing allocations process
- A discretionary payment of £5,000 to those who could not be re-homed in their current property but chose to participate in this option.

- 3.20 It is very hard to provide finalised costs without a clear understanding of the level of interest from individual owners (and therefore any economies of scale that could be realised) and of any damage which may result from removing the roof of the home. Members are asked to note the risk to the Council this introduces. Initial estimates suggest the Council should consider a value of between £30k and £40k per home, in addition to the roof costs for which the recovery from owners will be capped, and there may be a need to consider additional contingency beyond this due to the uncertainty.
- 3.21 It is important to note that all of the privately owned properties affected by RAAC in Balnagask were originally acquired by private individuals under the Right to Buy scheme (formerly under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987) and were purchased on a full repairing and insuring basis. The ongoing responsibility for maintenance and structural integrity rests with the private owner. There is no statutory obligation on the Council to undertake or fund repairs to these privately owned properties and owners could choose to work with other owners within a terrace to put in place and independently fund their own solution, and indeed request costs from the Council where they are the minority owner within a terrace. As at time of writing, no such requests have been made of the Council.
- 3.22 Any voluntary assistance provided by the Council must be strictly within the scope of discretionary powers and supported by a lawful funding mechanism. Having considered all of the constraints in place (as outlined in the Viability Assessment) officers have concluded that Option 3 is only viable if home owners make a contribution to the costs as this would help the Council ensure compliance with best value principles and with our public sector equality duty by partially mitigating the impact on the wider population of Aberdeen.
- 3.23 Option 3 scored lower under the health and safety criterion. Members will be aware that independent structural surveys to date have indicated that properties present a high risk. Recently acquired properties have now been surveyed for the first time, and these properties have also been assessed as high risk. Officers are however aware that an assessment of critical risk could trigger enforcement action. This does present a risk of owners being required to vacate properties at pace. Officers propose to secure and share comprehensive advice on enforcement action with owners. If Option 3 is taken forward there will be a need to agree collectively with owners how this risk will be mitigated through the owners agreeing to vacate their current homes timeously.
- 3.24 Owners are really concerned about covering the costs of any decant required due to the need to continue to make mortgage payments and make provision for rent. As a result, it is proposed that if this option is taken forward in sufficient volume, a terrace could be identified for the first phase of works and be used as a decant home for those who require this arrangement. Again, detailed proposals, including the identification of the most appropriate terraces, cannot be developed until officers have a clearer understanding of the number of owners who might be

interested in this option. **It should be noted that within this option an owner unable to meet the costs could have their property re-roofed or moved in a property that has been re-roofed with no up-front outlay (as outlined in 3.18) to them,** subject to the wider delivery issues.

- 3.25 It is the opinion of Officers that Option 3, although complex and with risk, is a viable Option subject to the allocation of costs as outlined above. Committee are asked to note however that the TRCG have advised that they would not support Option 3 if any costs are expected to be met by owners. For this reason, **this option should only be considered viable if there is sufficient interest from owners to undertake Option 3 on one full terrace.** With Committee approval, officers will write to owners in order to determine levels of interest.
- 3.26 Option 4 (excambion) as outlined in the Viability Assessment scored higher than the other options and could present a helpful alternative for some owners. There are limitations however in the size of the properties that could be made available to owners. The current Market Value of both properties would be used.
- 3.27 Any difference in value will be met by either party, for example if the new home identified has a greater value than the current home, the owner will be asked to fund the difference in value or vice versa. Owners who require support to meet such costs, could make payment through a missing share mechanism or loan agreement.
- 3.28 In relation to costs incurred by the Council it is proposed that the Council meet all other reasonable and demonstrable costs to include the following with exceptions subject to consideration on a case by case basis:
- Project management costs
 - Legal costs (insofar as properly and reasonably incurred)
 - Removal costs
 - Disturbance and home loss as per Voluntary process
 - Deep clean
 - Safety checks
 - Mortgage/ security costs (process/ variation costs etc.)
 - Managing process
- 3.29 Undertaking this Viability Assessment has guided officers to recognise that no one solution will fully meet the needs of each individual, and acknowledges the very different circumstances of individual owners. Officers conclude that a mixed solution may be required to meet the shared objectives.
- 3.30 As a result, it is proposed that the options made available to owners be extended and include:
- Making their own homes safe by working with other owners within a terrace to identify a solution, and asking the Council to contribute to meeting the costs associated with any Council homes within the terrace (already available).
 - Voluntary acquisition at Market Value (already in place).
 - A Roof off/roof on Option, with the owner meeting the capped cost of the roof replacement and Council meeting all other reasonable costs.
 - A house swap option.

- 3.31 With Committee approval, officers will engage with owners to share the outcome of the Viability Assessment, and progress both options with owners on the terms outlined in the Viability Assessment. Work will also be undertaken to engage with owners/private landlords who are currently choosing not to engage, with a view to having a clear indication of demand for each option by the end of June to support proactive planning. This will also allow masterplanning and demolition planning and engagement works to be progressed from July 2025.

TCRG proposed delivery mechanism

- 3.32 As can be seen in Appendix A, the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee propose that an independent body be established to oversee the works for Option 3. They propose that the Council would fund the body and allow the body to take decisions around the works, funding, specification and procurement routes.
- 3.33 The Group suggests that some form of block grant to the body, which is set up to oversee the project, would enable the works to be carried out in a cost-effective and timeous manner providing proper governance, value for money and saving the Council around £2-3m from the costs that it would incur if all owners were to agree to the Voluntary Acquisition scheme. The Group believe that a saving of £2-3m to the Council would clearly constitute 'Best Value'. Block grants are awarded by Council to other external bodies to assist with their functioning so the group feels that such an arrangement could also apply in respect of this proposal.
- 3.34 Delegating control of public funds for capital works to an unregulated external body without procurement and governance safeguards would contravene the Council's duties under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and procurement legislation. Accordingly, this option is not deemed viable.

Landscaping Proposals and Masterplanning

- 3.35 Report [CR&E/25/057](#) on demolition and landscaping options, presented to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in March 2025, identified that work to explore alternative options presented by owners could heavily influence both the demolition phasing and landscaping options. As such no further work on masterplanning the site or consulting on demolition processes has been taken forward whilst these options are being considered.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 On 5 March 2025, Council agreed a funding solution using the capital fund to enable the Voluntary Acquisition of properties impacted by RAAC. It is proposed that this funding solution be used to support delivery of the options detailed within this report. This funding mechanism (designed to release up to £12.75m) was to help realise a cleared site for Masterplanning.

- 4.2 Neither Option 3 or Option 4, as outlined in the Viability Assessment, would realise a fully cleared site. The Council cannot accept open-ended financial liability for circumstances arising from private ownership and is required to consider any impacts associated with offering financial assistance to owners, particularly where no legal duty exists. This does not mean that the Council cannot support, but does mean that the Council has a duty to act equitably, responsibly, and in line with its statutory powers. Given that the need to secure best value remains paramount, it is proposed that the Chief Officers for Finance, Housing and Corporate Landlord discuss the content of this report formally with External Audit and ask them to confirm that they have no objections to the Value For Money aspects of the recommendations within this report.
- 4.3 The Aberdeen City Region Deal contains a £20 million Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to '*unlock housing sites that are of strategic importance to the local authorities for the delivery of affordable homes.*' To date no projects put forward by both Local Authorities have been successful for HIF. The Finance and Resources Committee on 7 May 2025 instructed the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consider the options and possibilities that may be available through the Housing Infrastructure Fund as part of the Balnagask Masterplanning exercise. A link to the guidance is noted below.
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/housing-infrastructure-fund-guidance-for-applications/>
- 4.4 Having reviewed the guidance and associated criteria, officers remain of the view that the work being undertaken to address RAAC in Balnagask does not meet the qualifying conditions. At the time of this report being written however, officers are in on-going conversation with Scottish Government officials.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no statutory duty on the Council to undertake or fund remedial works to privately owned properties affected by RAAC. These properties were acquired under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 through the Right to Buy scheme on a full repairing and insuring basis. Ongoing maintenance responsibilities, including structural integrity, remain with the individual private owners.
- 5.2 Where appropriate, support may be provided using discretionary powers under section 20 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to advance wellbeing. However, such support must operate proportionately within the limits of statutory competence, be financially sustainable, and be consistent with the Council's obligations to achieve Best Value (section 1, 2003 Act). Any financial assistance must not displace the primary responsibility of owners and must be underpinned by enforceable legal agreements.
- 5.3 Options 3 and 4 (roof replacement/and excambion) are considered legally viable where sufficient owner participation is secured and formalised through appropriate legal agreements. Where owner contributions are proposed, including loans or equity arrangements, these must be clearly documented and secured (e.g. by standard security). However, care must be taken where limited property value or title conditions may restrict enforceability or long-term recovery.

- 5.4 Disposal of any Council-owned property in connection with these options must comply with section 12 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, including demonstrating that any disposal is for market value or otherwise delivers benefit to the Housing Revenue Account. This applies equally to any proposed excambion arrangement.
- 5.5 The Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations 2010 permit below market value disposals only where the authority is satisfied that the disposal will promote or improve economic, social, or environmental wellbeing. Any such disposal must be supported by an independent valuation and subject to appropriate governance oversight.
- 5.6 Proposals that rely solely on Council funding to remediate privately owned homes, without reciprocal title transfer or contribution, are not considered legally viable and may conflict with Best Value obligations. Any delivery model must preserve appropriate Council control, financial accountability, and statutory compliance. The Council must ensure consistency and fairness in its approach, particularly where homeowners decline reasonable offers, delay or do not undertake works necessary to ensure properties are structurally sound, safe and habitable.
- 5.7 Where owners decline or delay engagement, or where structural conditions deteriorate and pose a continuing or advancing health and safety risk, the Council may consider enforcement action. Statutory powers under sections 28–30 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 allow intervention where buildings are deemed dangerous or defective. These powers include issuing notices requiring works, ordering evacuation, and undertaking emergency measures at cost to the owner. Enforcement under section 87 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 may also be considered for houses determined to fall below the tolerable standard, again with cost recovery from the owner.
- 5.8 Should voluntary routes be exhausted, the Council retains the option of promoting a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). The justification for any CPO must be robust and demonstrate that acquisition is necessary and in the public interest. The appropriate route for any such order, including whether it proceeds under general planning powers or in connection with housing renewal, will require detailed assessment, masterplanning and would be subject to Scottish Ministers' approval.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are differing environmental implications with each option, with any environmental retrofit of properties being outwith the scope of this assessment. In general terms options that retain properties and avoid demolition costs will have some environmental benefit in terms of the impact on use of resources and embedded carbon. This should be weighed against houses continuing in use which are powered by fossil fuels and not to current environmental standards. The house swap option will be positive in environmental terms in so far as it will bring properties into economic use quicker with associated environmental benefit.

7. RISK

- 7.1 Previous committee reports have addressed the wider risks around RAAC in residential properties including the risk of panel failure within individual properties. Programmes of monitoring and inspection continue within occupied Council-owned properties. As the Council move towards having all Council tenants rehomed, the risk changes from the risks of being a landlord to those of being a regulatory authority.
- 7.2 The risks considered within this report focus around the options considered within this report as opposed to the ongoing concern with RAAC panels in private property.
- 7.3 Taking account of the above, the assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk	*Does Target Risk v Appetite
Strategic Risk	<p>Ability to manage Health and Safety Risk in private Homes</p> <p>Ability to redevelop wider site</p> <p>Failure of a RAAC panel.</p>	<p>Continue to share information on the health and safety risk presented by the RAAC panels. Clarify what enforcement action will entail should Building Standards determine that they require to take action.</p> <p>Try, as far as possible, to ensure that any terraces identified for the roof off roof on option enable future masterplanning.</p> <p>Continue to carry out further surveys to manage risk. Current findings have found that the Council-owned void and Council-owned occupied properties surveyed will require remedial action. To mitigate the risk of failure in occupied properties, affected tenants are being rehomed.</p> <p>Communication with all stakeholders and sharing of relevant reports.</p> <p>Updating of the FAQ.</p>	<i>M</i>	Yes

Compliance	Council risk as regulatory authority	<p>ACC has powers under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 where there is the potential enforcement in regard to a dangerous and defective building - ACC are acting responsibly following independent structural engineering advice and are rehoming tenants.</p> <p>ACC have written to private owners reminding them of their responsibility and shared structural reports.</p> <p>ACC have published FAQs on website.</p>	<i>M</i>	Yes
	Legal process and housing regulator	<p>Legal advice is being taken at all parts of the process. Officers are in contact with the Scottish Housing Regulator on all options available.</p> <p>The Legal Implications section of the report identifies the implications associated with the report and the various powers open to the Council.</p>	<i>L</i>	Yes
Operational	Ongoing management of RAAC in private homes and potential deterioration of panels.	RAAC remains a health and safety issue in private homes. If conditions were to deteriorate there may be a requirement to respond to this urgently at an operational level.	<i>M</i>	Yes
	Delivery of Options – internal capacity / skills and knowledge	Review of capacity required following Council decisions/initial engagement with owners to ensure that an appropriately skilled team are in place to help manage the delivery of new options presented to owners some of which add a significant degree of complexity.	<i>M</i>	Yes
	Maintaining business as usual.	Managing the RAAC process has and will continue to take significant resource within the Council teams, particularly at	<i>M</i>	Yes

		senior levels. This is likely to have an impact on wider business priorities and objectives.		
Financial	The current financial burden to mitigate the RAAC impact is still developing and will continue to be quantified.	Work with housing, legal, finance and external advisor teams to understand and address the RAAC impacts and inform the Options. Continue to seek external funding opportunities	<i>M</i>	<i>No</i>
	Opportunity cost of spend elsewhere (other savings will require to be made to meet costs)	As new information comes forward Members will be advised for any decision-making if required.	<i>H</i>	<i>No</i>
	Risk around non payment of loan repayments / shared equity and future recovery.	Further detail requires to be developed around protecting the Council's interests, albeit it is envisaged that security would be required against properties in most circumstances.	<i>M</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Reputational	Communication on responsibilities of owners/ market value and requirement to address issue	Develop clear and concise information for owners on the options available to support them and on their responsibilities as home owners.	<i>M</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	Clear communication on what is being offered	Continue to balance the needs and wants of those living in Balnagask with the wider population needs to ensure that the risk to the wider population is mitigated as far as possible.	<i>L</i>	<i>Yes</i>
	Criticism around cutting Council services and supporting private homeowners	Implement clear communication and engagement plan and address impact within all reports.	<i>M</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Environment / Climate	Inefficient use of resources with subsequent	All options will have a differing environmental impact which will require		

	environmental impact.	to be considered in delivery options.	L	Yes
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8. OUTCOMES

- 8.1 The Option Appraisal considers how each option relates to social and economic outputs and this forms part of the appraisal.

Council Delivery Plan 2025	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	The issues arising with the occurrence of RAAC in our housing stock requires us to work collaboratively across clusters to ensure the housing stock is safe and meets the varying needs of our citizens. The goal is to ensure that our current housing stock is fit for the future and brought up to the highest standards where possible.
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The actions from this report will help mitigate the immediate impact on affected owners.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Taking early intervention action as outlined within this report will help mitigate any negative impact on people's physical and mental wellbeing.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	This report makes recommendations on the viability of the affected housing stock along with any wider implications this may have on the place.
Regional and City Strategies	This report has collated information from various workstreams including stakeholder engagement sessions to inform recommendations to mitigate the occurrence of RAAC in Council housing stock at Balnagask. Future reports and actions will take account of the Regional and City Strategies to formulate any further recommendations.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Updated Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed in relation to the options considered in this report.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not Required
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A - Workshop write up

11.2 Appendix B – Viability Assessment

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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APPENDIX A

Workshop to explore the options presented by the Management Committee on 12th March 2025 at Greyhope Community Hub.

Welcome and context: John welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

John outlined that the workshop had been organised in the hope of turning the Management Group proposals into viable options that could be presented for consideration by Council.

John went on to explain that the workshop had been designed to help owners and Council officers develop a shared understanding of the pros and cons of the two options, recognising that a positive for an owner may actually be a challenge for the Council and vice versa. The opportunity to think together about how any risks might be mitigated and where responsibilities would sit should help us get to a point where the viability of the options could be agreed.

John shared that he expected to hear and see lots of talking and listening, with no-one doing all of the talking. He emphasised that it will be important that everyone leaves the meeting feeling that they have had their say.

John noted that compromise will be needed from both owners and Council officers.

The options to be explored: Raymond reminded the Group of the two options presented to Council for consideration.

Option 1: Exchange privately owned properties scattered throughout the site with vacant Council owned properties at the periphery of the site. The properties at the periphery of the site will have RAAC roof replaced with a suitable alternative.

Option 2: Swapping a property in Balnagask for a Council property of equal pre RAAC value in a minority owned block elsewhere in the city

The Management Group shared that owners had previously been asked of their interest in the two options. Whilst most owners indicated that they were keen to await an improved cash offer from the Council for their property, the first of the two options was also a popular option with around one third of the 30 respondents stating they would consider this option. A smaller number were keen to explore Option 2, but there was still interest. It was agreed that we should not restrict the number of options, but offer choice where we can.

It was agreed that it would be important to understand how many owners would likely opt for each of the two offers prior to a report being presented to Council. It was agreed that we would work to develop further clarity around the two potential options and that the Management Group would engage with owners to ensure that interest could be reported to Council. It was noted that between 30 and 40 owners are choosing not to engage with either the local Management Group or the Council and that we may need to think together about how to elicit their views.

There was discussion around what was meant by Pre-RAAC value. It was agreed that the Management Group mean the current market value as if the property was RAAC free. It was noted that the financial impact with RAAC present within properties varies from £20,000 to £45,000. The downturn in the local housing market, in particular flatted properties was noted, as was the fact that this will have impacted on property values, but there was agreement from the Group that the loss due to the decline in the general housing market was beyond the scope of this work.

Actions: Eleanor to shape up a paper to present potential options to owners.

Actions: Management Group to think about how best to engage owners, with a particular focus on those who find it harder to engage.

Exploring Option 1: Stephen showed a map of the area and members of the Group noted the spread of privately owned and privately tenanted properties across the site. It was agreed that areas with a higher proportion of privately owned properties might steer our thinking.

Stephen noted that a number of surveys and checks have been undertaken across the site, and that these surveys do not restrict our thinking about the terraces that could be considered under this option.

Stephen shared that the roofs are such that the full terrace would have to be replaced at the same time, there is no option to address a single roof without compromising other properties. On that basis, we agreed to look at full blocks of terraces.

The Management Group raised that they believe that some properties may be suffering from subsidence and it would be important that those buildings are not chosen. It would also be helpful to avoid any terraces with particular issues such as damp and that reviewing repairs history might be helpful.

Stephen then asked the Group to consider two potential scenarios within this option:

1A - An owner whose property is identified for roof replacement and would therefore move out of their own home for building works on a short term basis and then return to their own home: and

1B - An owner who is asked to move away from their own family home and into a similar sized home on the periphery of the site.

The Management Group feel that there should be no financial loss (or gain) for owners in the 1A and 1B Group, but accepted that the level of compensation for those in 1B should be greater.

It was agreed that discussions would be required with mortgage lenders to check that they would be comfortable with proposals.

In the case of those in the 1A Group, the Management Group feel that a disturbance payment should be made to cover the cost of redecoration or addressing any damaged resulting from removing the roof etc. following the building works. Those in this group would also expect support to decant temporarily during the building works given that there would be real

challenges in covering mortgage and rental payments. The Group are keen to explore the option of temporary housing pods on site that could be utilised by groups as the work is completed on their own home. The Management Group proposed that anyone who wasn't keen to use the temporary housing pods should be expected to make their own arrangements at their own cost for the period of building works. It was agreed that this would help mitigate the current health and safety risk.

The Management Group shared that the concerns most frequently aired by owners were about the condition of boilers, kitchens and bathrooms in Council owned properties.

In the case of the 1B Group, it was felt that a disturbance and home loss payment should apply. It would be important that homes were habitable and safe. It was agreed that owners should be able to take any kitchens/bathrooms with them if feasible to do so.

In the case of 1A and 1B, The Management Group would be open to the Council meeting all costs of the roof directly or offering a fully funded Grant. The Management Group believe that the options presented would be more cost effective for the Council. It was noted that there would be economies of scale by coordinating the works.

Officers noted that they have duties around the use of public money and that we would need to present a 'best value' option and follow all financial and procurement regulations. It is important that the Management Group don't think about having a hypothetical budget of £12.7m, there is a need for us to work to evidence that the 2 options are significantly more cost effective and better for owners whilst ensuring that we can comply with earlier Council decisions to demolish the Council housing stock and all financial and procurement regulations. It is important to remember that Council tax payers will be funding any decisions taken for years to come.

It was noted that some properties have cavity wall insulation and others do not. The benefits of exploring other grants for energy efficiency home improvements were noted. It was accepted that if owners accepted a grant for works they may be more able to leverage additional funding to support them making home improvements. These options are not available to the Council and this may be a factor in determining when deeds are exchanged so that those in the 1B category can benefit.

The project management of the works was discussed. Further consideration and exploration of how Option 1 would be managed is required before determining if the Council would act as Agent and subcontract the work or if the Grant would be offered to home owners. A non-profit organisation in Bristol was referenced as an option and this will be explored further by Matthew and Stephen.

Warranties for the works were noted as being important for owners. This would have to be considered and factored into any procurement.

Officers flagged their concerns around allocating properties (1B option.) The Management Group feel that a blind ballot approach should be taken. It was acknowledged that medical needs may have to be considered, as well as consideration of where family homes are located given the indicative demolition phases.

On Option 1B, it was noted that the owners of 4 bedroomed properties may be slightly disadvantaged due to the small number of 4 bedroomed properties on site. This may mean that owners of 4 bedroomed properties be asked to register an interest in any property they

feel would meet their needs and requires further consideration. The group agreed that there will be a need to take a pragmatic approach.

Officers noted that they will have to work up a range of options around funding, spanning from the Council covering all costs to the owners covering all costs for Option 1A. This will include lesser known costs such as statutory consents etc.

Matthew noted that it would be helpful to remove one roof to support planning. Eleanor noted that this would not be possible at this stage without a Council instruction.

Action: Scott to look into temporary housing pods

Action: Matthew and Stephen to follow up on the Bristol not for profit approach

Actions: Scott to look at repairs history to see if this rules any terraces out of consideration for Option 1.

Actions: Scott to explore structural issues to see if this rules any terraces out of consideration for Option 1.

Actions: Eleanor to work up a more detailed paper and then reconvene the Group to discuss.

Exploring Option 2: Stephen shared that as of today we have identified approximately 60 properties - minority owned 1 and 2 bed properties (flats, four in a block and maisonettes) across the city. Value has not as yet been assessed. As a result, this doesn't look as attractive an option for those with larger properties. Discussion around this option will be required with the Scottish Housing Regulator.

It was noted that there is a need to explore any implications of fixed term mortgage deals on this option.

On allocations, it was again suggested that this be through blind ballot. The Group noted that this option doesn't help those with larger properties, although the Management Group noted that some owners are keen to downsize.

The Management Group noted that the property being moved into would have to be safe and habitable. It was recognised that the valuation of the alternative property would take account of the current condition so this would need to be worked through. For some, particularly those with a trade, this could be a really attractive option as they might be able to increase the value of the property by undertaking works themselves.

It was agreed that any difference in value should not be seen as a reason to not see this as a viable option. It was agreed however that a mechanism would be required to enable the difference in value to be met by either the Council or the owner (money passed from one to another). Any property 'sold' by the Council would have a survey and home report.

The Management Group feel that a home loss and disturbance payment would be required and sought agreement that kitchens, bathrooms etc. could be removed from their existing property with the home loss payment potentially covering costs in the new property.

The Management Group noted that it would be helpful to have a sense of the history of repairs on the property if available.

Action: ACC to consider the appetite of Mortgage lenders for Option 2

Action: Jacqui to raise with Scottish Housing Regulator

Next steps: It was agreed that Eleanor will produce a note of the meeting and share it with John so that any missed information can be added. A final and agreed version will then be circulated to all parties.

The various actions will be progressed as Eleanor starts to think about how to turn our discussions into options for Council. Both options are likely to have a number of different delivery mechanisms (funding options). There will be a need to reconvene in the near future.

Action: Eleanor to start thinking about how to present the options to Council

Action: Eleanor and John to coordinate any further meetings.

Workshop to explore the Viability of the options presented by the Management Committee on 29th April 2025 at Greyhope Community Hub.

Introduction

Everyone was welcomed to this second workshop between officers and the Management Committee. New members of the Committee were introduced to officers.

It was agreed that the purpose of the workshop was to look at the progress made in determining the viability of options so that Elected Members can be presented with additional viable options to consider.

The Group agreed that Officers would again note the discussion at the workshop and share a draft account with the Group for comment/approval. The Group agreed that the note of both workshops could be included within the Committee report.

Action: Officers to include the workshop notes in the Committee report

Officers outlined that the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee next meet on the 27th of May 2025, and officers are trying to be able to report the viability of options then.

Officers shared that they hoped to explore some of the thinking informing the perceived viability of options tonight, and that there would be agreement on some of that thinking and disagreement on other areas. It was further noted that some of the worked proposals, particularly around how the proposals would be funded, may be more challenging to gain agreement on.

Officers proposed that the committee report should clearly articulate where there is agreement, but also detail where we have not been able to secure agreement. This was agreed.

Action: Officers to outline where the agreement and disagreement sits

The Group asked that officers clarify what can be shared with wider members of the Group at this meeting and any subsequent meetings. This was agreed.

Action: Officers to share information that can be shared with the wider Group following each engagement between officers and the Group.

THE WORKSHOP

What do we hope to achieve?

The group/officers reminded themselves of the shared task agreed at the last meeting. This was to:

- turn the proposals into viable options for owners.

- develop a shared understanding of the pros and cons of each option.
- identify any mitigations that might be required to help manage risks; and
- agree on the viability of options and where responsibilities would sit.

As agreed at the last meeting, it is expected that we will see and hear:

- lots of talking and listening, with no-one doing all the talking.
- everyone leaving feeling that they have had their say; and
- compromise from all.

The Group/officers reminded themselves that we will know we have been successful if we have:

- have fully explored both options; and
- have agreement on what will be presented to Council and a clear plan of how to manage the challenges ahead.

Follow up on the actions from the last workshop.

A number of actions were identified at the previous workshop. Feedback on progress was given on all actions including:

- Looking into temporary housing pods
- Followed up on the Bristol not for profit approach.
- Looking at repairs history to see if this rules any terraces out of consideration.
- Exploring any structural issues to see if this rules any terraces out of consideration.
- Liaison with the Housing Regulator
- Thinking how to present the Viability Assessment.

The Viability Assessment

Officers propose that five options be assessed for viability.

1. **Do Nothing**
2. **Current proposal** – Voluntary Acquisition at Market Value
3. **TCRC Group Option** - Exchange for another property in Balnagask
4. **TCRC Group Option** - Swap for another property in the city of equal value
5. **UK RAAC option** – Adopt a full roof replacement scheme where homeowners opt

for remedial works with additional optional external environmental upgrades funded through low or no interest loans/grants

These five options were agreed by the Group.

Three areas were proposed as being out of scope:

- Properties owned by ACC/ HRA being brought back into use for Council housing.
- Being able to offer market value on the special assumption that the properties do not contain RAAC
- Funding for environmental retrofit given that there may be opportunities available to homeowners for environmental retrofit that are not available to the Council.

These areas were agreed.

It was acknowledged that should external funding be identified in advance of work being undertaken to properties, it would be desirable to coordinate any environmental works with the main programme.

Primary objectives for Aberdeen City Council

These were shared with the Group as being to:

- Negate the Health and Safety issues with the properties
- Provide clarity for owners on available options to assist their decision making and positive wellbeing
- Identify a solution(s) that causes the least harm to homeowners
- Ensure mechanisms are in place to ensure affordability of any further options for owners given that they advise that they do not have the resources to fund up-front costs
- Identify a solution(s) that takes account of the topography of the site and allows masterplanning and planned demolition of redundant stock to be taken forward
- Lessen the financial impact on Aberdeen City Council, domestic rate payers and the Housing Revenue Account given that no additional resources have been made available to the Council.

The ordering of these primary objectives was discussed and amended (see above).

The Group acknowledged and accepted these primary objectives for the Council.

There was significant discussion on budget and who would pay for what. Officers noted that this is an area we may not be able to secure agreement on tonight.

The Group referred to the Council having approved a budget of circa £12.7m to cover costs of Voluntary Acquisition of all properties. The Group believe that if all owners were to accept the Voluntary Acquisition proposal the council would have to find that sum to meet the purchase price of all properties. Officers clarified that although the cost of the Voluntary Acquisitions process had been accepted, the on-going finance required (for example to

cover the cost of Voluntary Acquisition process), requires to be found on an on-going basis. This might be found by using resources available through Council Tax, by making budget savings, through borrowing etc. or other means. Officers shared that a mechanism has been found for the coming year. Officers outlined that the budget is not sitting in a separate account and able to act as a budget for the Group to work within (See Note A). Officers shared that the budget identified presumes that there will be a clear site ready for redevelopment. Officers referred to the previous workshop where this had been discussed.

The Group asked if this is why people who have sold their properties have not received their money. Officers responded that any delay was more likely due to the legal process being worked through.

The Group further noted that the fact that the money requires to be found on an on-going basis makes them feel less important.

The Group then asked if the Officers could call Council meetings to gain a decision when needed. Officers explained that there is a schedule of meetings in place, and officers would try to work within the schedule of set meetings.

The primary objectives for Owners

Based on our discussion at the last workshop, officers proposed these as being:

- a) Be able to live in a safe, free from risk home
- b) Negate financial loss as far as possible
- c) Have certainty around next steps and associated timescales to enable them to move on.

The group proposed an amendment to the second proposed objective to read, 'no financial loss to homeowners'

As a result, the primary objectives for owners were agreed as:

- a) Be able to live in a safe, free from risk home
- b) **No** financial loss to homeowners
- c) Have certainty around next steps and associated timescales to enable them to move on.

Action: Officers will review their scorings considering this change.

The Viability Assessment

Option 1 – Do Nothing

This option is not viable due to the significant health and safety risks associated with RAAC properties.

There is a high likelihood that owners will remain living in properties which are likely to have high risk in relation to IStructE guidance.

It was agreed that this is not a viable option due to the health and safety risk presented by RAAC.

Option 2 – Voluntary Acquisition at Market Value

- Risk of owners not engaging with the District Valuation Agency due to compensation expectations not being met, leading to owners being served with statutory notices due to the health and safety risk.
- Risk to owner wellbeing, which is being partially mitigated by the commissioning of SAMH, however, the uncertainty around next steps is of particular concern to owners and the misinformation is impacting mental health and wellbeing.
- Risk of misinformation about the potential use of the homes impacted by RAAC
- Risk of further structural surveys identifying RAAC panels as being a critical risk, which could trigger statutory enforcement. (see Note B)

The Group noted that they felt that the risk to wellbeing should be further up the bullet pointed list and this was amended.

There was then some discussion on the scoring presented by Officers with the group not feeling that the financial risk to owners is mitigated through this option.

It was agreed that a blank grid be shared with the Group, and the Group will consider the scoring more fully. Officers agreed to include the scoring from the Group in the papers appended to the Committee report alongside the scoring from officers.

There was some discussion with the group around the council approach to Market Value not reflecting 'pre-RAAC' valuation and advise that the Valuation Office had suggested that owners would be in no worse a position following the sale of their property. Officers acknowledged that 'no worse a position' reflects owners having a house with RAAC.

Officers further advised that the Market Value approach was higher than other mechanisms which may reflect site value only. (see Note C)

Action: Officers will send a blank grid for the Group to populate.

Action: Officers to include the scoring from the Group in the Committee Report

Option 3 – Exchange for Another Property in Balnagask (roof off, roof on)

- Risk that this option cannot be delivered in a terrace where an individual owner is not prepared to engage in the process.

The Group feel that this could be mitigated by carefully selecting the clusters of dwellings to be upgraded.

- Risk that owners who are offered a home in an alternative location on site, may feel aggrieved and their own home be subject to roof replacement.

The Group feels that this can be overcome through effective management of the situation at the appropriate time.

- Given that the land would not be available for future development, this would be required to be considered from a best value perspective. This is best tested with External Audit.

The Group believe that the loss of low value land will be more than offset by savings achieved by the Council not having to demolish those dwellings.

- Owners who are keen to take advantage of this option, may deem that their properties are safe to live in during the works. Risk that this could lengthen the time owners remain at risk.

The Group feel that this could be mitigated by making their vacating of properties during works part of the overall 'deal.'

- Risk that future development will be more challenging for the Council.

The Group feel that the proposed cluster(s) will render the remainder of the site easily developable.

Officers deem that this is viable, but complex and risky. The group believe the option is viable provided the costs of the works are not incurred by owners and that the risks can be mitigated through careful management.

The Group recognised the concern / complexity around allocations and said that this had been discussed (but not resolved) recently at the wider group meeting. The Group believes the allocations of dwellings can however be easily resolved and that there is always the choice for owners not wishing to participate in this scheme to choose an alternative option.

The Group also feel that selecting some clusters of properties on the edge of the site would mean that it does not necessarily become more complex for development. It was noted however, that if you were looking where there is the highest proportion of ownership, the identified clusters may not be on the very edge of the site. The Group do not feel that current ownership should be the primary consideration and noted that there is always the choice for owners not wishing to participate in this scheme to choose an alternative option.

The Group advisor suggested that the entire programme be taken away from the Council in a bid to stay away from Council procurement and financial arrangements. He would advocate establishing a separate entity with a Board structure that would be fully funded by the council but not within direct council day to day control. To clarify, the Council allocate the separate entity a budget and that the separate entity manages the budget through a Board structure that would include Council officers to ensure fiscal control and good governance, as required by law. Officers noted that it would not be possible to circumvent procurement and financial regulations in this way but will seek legal advice. (Note D)

Action: Officers to seek legal advice on this proposal

The Group noted that the scoring of this option is like the previous option, although the scores against the five areas are quite different.

The Group again noted an interest in considering the scores more fully.

The proposed allocation of costs was discussed. Officers proposed that a funding mechanism be put in place for owners to pay for the actual roof replacement and that the Council cover costs for:

- Project management costs
- Legal costs
- Decant removal and storage costs
- Property re-instatement costs
- Statutory consents
- Schedule of works/ condition
- Deep clean
- Safety checks
- Vacant properties to minimum letting standard
- Mortgage/ security costs

Owners stay in own home – Owners decant on a temporary basis to allow the roof to be replaced and then move back to their own home. Decant could be funded by ACC if required. A funding solution (low-cost loan etc) would be offered to owners to meet the cost of the roof replacement and other ancillary building works. Flatted dwelling would meet 50% of roof costs.

Owners move into property of same size but currently owned by the Council -Owners agree to exchange their property for another within a terrace of properties where a decision is made to commit to roof replacement. Vacant properties are brought up to the current minimum letting standard and in exchange for the title to the owner's current property, they are given title to the property. The affected owner would have to contribute to the costs of roof replacement in the same way as owners who are able to return to their existing property. Council would offer the same level of support as outlined in above, along with a one-off payment of £5,000 to meet costs to turn the property into their new home.

The group shared that no homeowner would be prepared to pay for the cost of the roof replacement and asked about further compensation for mental health. The Group feel that they should be compensated for the last 18 months. (Note E)

The Group feel that consideration needs to be given to the property being left behind given that owners will have invested in that property as their home. (Note F)

The Group noted that any offer that does not include all costs (and compensation in addition) to be met by the Council would feel like a 'kick in the teeth.' The Group also shared that some people cannot work because of this crisis and would not be able to get back to work and so asking owners to contribute was unrealistic. (Note G)

Officers stated that options being considered including direct payment, 'soft' loans and where an owner could not contribute option for equity stakes in home. Members of the group stated that giving away equity in their home would not be acceptable to many. (Note H)

Action: Officers will reflect on the position of the group in the context of funding, loans, shared equity, and an equitable solution irrespective of preferred option.

The Group advisor noted that he felt officers and any advisors the council are using were being risk adverse and that there were additional savings to be made by not demolishing and landscaping. He maintained that the Council fully covering all owners' costs would still enable a saving of around £2m and that the implications would be the same as for voluntary acquisition.

Officers noted that without knowing the number of interested owners it was harder to determine highly accurate costs and to identify the terraces that might be in scope.

Officers shared that they are keen to say that the options are viable, irrespective of the financial deal offered. (see Note I)

The option was agreed as potentially viable, but without agreement on how the option is funded.

Option 4 – Swap for Another Property of Equal Value

The allocation of properties requires further exploration with the community.

The assessment has indicated that the viability of this option is worth pursuing further, as it may have benefits for owners and benefits for the council in terms of wider housing stock and prompt delivery. This option is highly deliverable and best negates health and safety risks, however, would not offer the property sizes some are looking to secure.

Any difference in value will be met by either party, for example if the new home identified has a greater value than the current home, the owner will be asked to fund the difference in value or vice versa. Officers proposed that a schedule would be available for each property for consideration highlighting the value, condition, and other basic details. The value of the new property could then be compared with the valuation of the owner's property prepared by the Valuation Office.

Owners who require support to meet such costs, could make payment through a funding mechanism (to be determined).

In relation to costs incurred by the Council this would include:

- Project management costs
- Legal costs
- Removal costs
- Deep clean
- Safety checks
- Mortgage/ security costs
- Managing process
- (Note J)

The Group asked clarifying questions. It was clarified that, only homes in minority ownership could be considered in keeping with the advice from the Scottish Housing Regulator. If the value of the new property were greater than the value of the owner's current property, the Council would passport money across to the owner. Similarly, if the value of the new property were higher, owners could pay the difference.

The Group asked if low-cost home ownership properties could be included. Officers confirmed that they could not as they do not belong to the Council.

The group again noted their desire for compensation above the £5000 suggested to make a house a home. Owners feel they should have the same level of payment as Council tenants. Officers agreed to look at this again.

Action: Officers to review compensation package on this option

Other considerations

There was a further discussion around the principles of best value, lowest monetary costs to the council and owners. Council officers recognised the complexity around funding arrangement and requirements to best use public monies.

Action: Officers to further explore the powers available to the council to support owners and include this within the committee report.

In summary

The Group and Officers agree that the two options are viable, but that we have not been able to agree the allocation of costs with the owners keen that there is no cost to them and that compensation is in place.

The advisor to the Group asked that the Council rethink the logic as he believes that Officers should be able to demonstrate that fully funding roof replacement is the best deal for the Council.

Officers thanked the group for their continued positive and respectful engagement, acknowledging that there had been some difficult discussion. Officers agreed to send a draft note of the meeting, scoring grid and slides through for the Group.

Action: Officers to send a draft note of the meeting, scoring grid and slides through to the Group.

Action: Group to send their scoring of the options through to Officers when completed.

Additional comments provided by the Group following the meeting.

Note A: The Group fully understands that monies are not sitting in an account currently, but nevertheless, if all owners were to accept the Voluntary Acquisition offer then it would cost the council in the region of £12.7m to meet its obligations. How the Council fund this amount

is clearly a matter for it to determine, but this sum would have to be found from some source(s). In addition, additional demolition costs of circa £10k per unit would have to be accounted for.

The Group believe that there would still be a clear site ready for redevelopment, it will however be smaller as some houses would be saved from demolition and the Balnagask community cohesion will be maintained to increase wellbeing of owner-residents. Additionally, given the location of the site to be cleared, and financial constraints, the Council Officers have already noted that redevelopment of this site may take considerable time.

Note B. This would only be relevant to the house(s) in question as none of the current surveys across the estate have classified any properties to be in a critical risk category. The owners would resist any statutory enforcement based on surveys not associated with their properties.

Note C. The Group would challenge any attempts to designate owner occupied properties in a critical risk category, based purely on any survey of Council owned properties, which would be required to reflect 'site value' only. The Group continues to assert that the market value approach is unsatisfactory and will continue to be rejected by the majority of owners, regardless of any attempts to pressure them to accept this approach by making reference to the 'site value' mechanism, which is not considered to be particularly helpful.

Note D: The Group suggests that some form of block grant to a body, which is set up to oversee the project, would enable the works to be carried out in a cost-effective and timeous manner providing proper governance, value for money and saving the Council around £2-3m from the costs that it would incur if all owners were to agree to the Voluntary Acquisition scheme. The Group believed that a saving of £2-3m to the Council would clearly constitute 'Best Value'. Block grants are awarded by Council to other external bodies to assist with their functioning so the group feels that such an arrangement could also apply in respect of this proposal.

Note E: The group also highlights the fact that under the current Officers' proposal, whereby owners pay for the cost of the roof replacement, there is no incentive for them to move into another property within Balnagask since, if they have the means to pay for a roof replacement, they can simply do so in respect of their existing house and thereafter have no reason to vacate it. This will provide additional difficulties to the Council in respect of demolition and development of the remaining site as it would remain interspersed with owner occupied houses that were no longer presenting any danger whatsoever to owners.

Note F: Given that the council are trying to treat these proposals akin to a CPO, owners under a CPO would be entitled to a home loss payment equal to 10% of the valuation of their property as well as a disturbance allowance for reasonable costs involved in the moving between properties. These costs have been accounted for within the Group's proposal, which saves the Council circa £2-3m over Voluntary Acquisition costs.

Note G: The Group believes that the proposal making owners liable for the cost of replacing roofs, which was only delivered to them by officers following their consideration of how to make them viable at this meeting, would render this option unviable. The Group feels that this option is even worse financially for owners than the Voluntary Acquisition proposal which, as already mentioned, has found few owners even remotely interested in due to the severe financial impact upon them, which they simply cannot afford.

Note H: The Group feel that this proposal was simply the Voluntary Acquisitions proposal dressed up as something else. Until this meeting it had been assumed by the Group that the costs of replacing the roofs would be fully covered by the Council, since it provided a more cost effective solution to the Council than Voluntary Acquisition of all of the properties and therefore made sense to proceed down this route for both parties.

Note I: The Group are keen to say that this option is only viable if the financial deal offered allows the owners to receive a RAAC free home without incurring costs, or losing equity, that they cannot afford, especially given that the Council will benefit from this option being viable to the tune of circa £2-3m less than the cost of VA of the properties.

Note J: The Group believes that the following additions should be made:

- Home loss payments as per CPO provisions
- Disturbance payments as per CPO provisions

APPENDIX B

Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee

27 May 2025

Viability Assessment	Proposals received for privately owned properties.		
Sponsoring Cluster	Corporate Landlord	Version	2

1. Background

At the meeting of **Council of 21 August 2024**, the Council considered a 'Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) – Outcome of options appraisal August 2024 Report ([CORS/24/204](#))'.

Amongst the recommendations within the Report was

2.2 Agrees that the optimum option is the demolition and rebuild of homes on site and instructs the Chief Officer - Capital to proceed with the demolition aspect of this (Option 4a), and to report back to the next appropriate meeting of Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on the initial phasing of demolition and landscape details.

Recommendations with an Impact on home owners were to:

2.6 Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer Finance to take forward negotiations with private owners to acquire their properties voluntarily at Market Value, noting that this will be a valuation of the property at the current date and be on the same basis as the CPO process. In addition to Market Value the council will be willing to meet reasonable legal and professional costs along with home loss and disturbance payments.

2.7 Instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer Housing as part of the negotiations with private owners to assess the housing options available for each individual owner to identify any support that can be offered in rehoming.

2.8 Instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer Governance to bring back a report to Council in late 2024/ early 2025 on options available to the Council to compulsorily acquire private properties to assist the delivery of the recommended option where required.

The estimated cost of voluntarily acquiring properties, and therefore delivering on this instruction, was noted as being in excess of circa £12.7m. This would have enabled a clear site for future masterplanning. The report noted that owners could chose to pursue their own solutions. As of today, the Council is not aware of such an approach being adopted by any individual owner.

Follow-on engagement with RAAC impacted owners and residents was undertaken with parties seeking proactive discussion in response to the Council's decisions. Council Officers engaged with the local Torry Community RAAC Campaign (TCRC) Group, UK RAAC Campaign Group and individual owners.

On behalf of home owners impacted by RAAC at Balnagask, the TCRC Group submitted two [proposals](#) for consideration by Council.

At Council on the 17 February 2025 a report entitled February 2025 RAAC Update ([F&C/25/030](#)) was considered. Officers were instructed to:-

(e) note the alternative options proposed by the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee and instruct officers to explore the feasibility, benefits and risks associated with each option, alongside any other identified opportunities to support owners, and

report the findings to a future meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee; and

- (f) *note that further reports on the subject would be brought to the budget meeting and the next meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee as outlined from paragraph 3.2 of the report.*

Within a few weeks of the decision of Council on 17 February, The UK RAAC Campaign Group submitted a further proposal for consideration (appended to this Viability Assessment).

Aberdeen City Council officers and members of the Torry Community RAAC Campaign Group met at Greyhope School and Community Hub on **12 March 2025** to workshop and discuss the proposals put forward by the TCRC Group in relation to the Council's response to RAAC affected properties in Balnagask.

Officers also sought clarification on a proposal submitted by the UK RAAC Campaign Group as the proposal could be interpreted as undoing previously taken decisions of Council. Following an opportunity to clarify the UK RAAC Campaign Group proposal, all three proposals have been explored for feasibility, benefits and risks as per the Council instruction.

A further meeting to discuss initial thinking around the viability assessment was held with the Torry Community RAAC Campaign Group on **29 April 2025** (note appended). At this meeting members of the Group clarified their belief that no cost should be incurred by homeowners. As a result, the issue of ensuring an equitable settlement for all homeowners, regardless of options, has also been given further consideration by officers.

2. Executive Summary

The alternative proposals presented by the Torry Community RAAC Campaign Group and UK RAAC Campaign Group have been reviewed to explore the impact these would have on owners of RAAC impacted properties and the wider site. The practicability of delivery, ease of property allocations and implications on masterplanning have been considered to determine suitability. Consideration of all of these factors has helped officers set out the feasibility, benefits and risks of each proposed option to help determine the viability of options that Members will want to consider.

In addition to considering the options from the owners perspective, consideration has been given to the financial impact in the short and long term. This is particularly key in considering the Housing Revenue Account impact on capital and revenue, and the associated impact of the costs on residents across the wider city given the challenging financial circumstances outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and on-going need for efficiency savings. The need to offer Members equitable solutions that do not inadvertently disadvantage other vulnerable groups across the city has been a key consideration.

For the purposes of completeness and for comparisons to be made, the current voluntary acquisition process has also been included in the Viability Assessment.

Undertaking this Viability Assessment has guided officers to recognise that no one solution will fully meet the needs of each individual owner, and acknowledges the very different circumstances of individual owners. Officers conclude that a mixed solution may be required to meet the shared objectives.

All viable options, including those requiring further consideration will be reported to committee seeking instruction to proceed in consultation with stakeholders.

The options/proposals explored are:

	Option	Recommendation	Rational
1.	Do Nothing	Not Viable	<p>This option does not meet the criteria for either the Council or the owners.</p> <p>It would leave owners in properties with significant health and safety risks, negatively impact their wellbeing and financial situation, and sterilize parts of the site, leading to antisocial behaviour and site security issues. The TCRC Group agree that this is not a viable option.</p>
2.	Voluntary Acquisition at Market Value	Viable Option	<p>This option allows owners to sell their properties to the Council at market value, providing them with some certainty and mitigating financial risks. However, it has a high cost to the Council and taxpayers, and some owners are not engaging with the process due to dissatisfaction with the offered value. The TCRC Group do not believe that this option is viable.</p>
3.	Exchange for another property in Balnagask (roof off, roof on)	Complex, higher risk but viable option subject to agreement on funding.	<p>This option allows owners to stay in their homes or move to a similar property within the community, but it requires significant coordination and investment of resources and there are unknown risks that would be held by the Council. It also makes masterplanning more difficult. In determining the option viable, officers propose that this option is part funded by owners to ensure equity and help Council comply with the public sector equality duty. The TCRC Group believe this option is viable, that the owner contribution set out by officers is unrealistic and that all costs should be met by the Council.</p>
4.	Swap for another property of equal value	Viable Option	<p>This option can be formalised relatively quickly, reducing the time owners remain in RAAC-impacted properties. It mitigates financial losses for owners and makes masterplanning more feasible. However, it requires careful coordination of property allocations and may lead to some owners feeling aggrieved. The TCRC Group believe that this is a viable option if home loss and disturbance payments are met by the Council.</p>
5.	Adopt a full roof replacement scheme where	Viable in part	<p>This option allows homeowners to stay in their homes and improve energy efficiency, but it requires significant financial support</p>

	homeowners opt for remedial works with additional optional external and environmental upgrades funded through low or no interest loans/grants		and coordination. This option would not leave a site that could be subject to any masterplanning. As a result, delivery of this option would compromise the delivery of previous Council instructions.
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3. Business Aims, Constraints and Statutory Responsibilities

The proposals have been reviewed and analysed, taking into account factors such as the impact on owners, community, buildability, commercial, legal and financial impact. Other considerations around the practicability of delivery and future property allocations were also considered.

In determining viability, it is important to recognise that the Council's role in relation to privately owned property is limited by law. While the Council has sought to engage positively with affected owners, it cannot accept open-ended financial liability for circumstances arising from private ownership. The Council has a duty to act equitably, responsibly, and in line with its statutory powers.

Best Value

The Council is under a statutory duty to secure Best Value in terms of Section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 (the "2003 Act"). This duty requires the Council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the performance of its functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between the quality of services, the cost of those services, and the resources available. The Council must have regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and the need to maintain equal opportunities and promote the observance of the equal opportunity requirements (as noted within the legislation).

In applying the Best Value duty the Council must act in a way that secures the optimal use of public funds across its functions. It must ensure that its decisions are evidence-based, proportionate, risk-aware, and equitable. In this context, the Council is required to consider not only the interests of the affected private homeowners in Balnagask, but also those of other residents across the City, including Council tenants, individuals on housing waiting lists, and other vulnerable service users. The application of Best Value does not entitle individual homeowners to public funding to remedy defects in privately owned property, nor does it support an approach where public resources are used to compensate for matters falling within the responsibilities of ownership.

The statutory guidance on Best Value, published by the Scottish Government in 2020 under the authority of the 2003 Act, identifies the "effective use of resources" as a key theme. This includes ensuring that local authorities have robust arrangements in place to manage assets, allocate resources based on strategic priorities, and demonstrate that resources are not misused. These principles are particularly relevant where the Council is considering significant capital expenditure in relation to private assets, and where doing so may create expectations or precedents that cannot be sustained within lawful powers or available budgets.

Making the best use of public resources is at the heart of delivering Best Value. With clear plans and strategies in place, and with sound governance and strong leadership, a local

authority will be well placed to ensure that all of its resources are deployed to achieve its strategic priorities, meet the needs of its communities and deliver continuous improvement.

In achieving Best Value, a local authority will be able to demonstrate the following:

- It makes best use of its financial and other resources in all of its activities.
- Decisions on allocating resources are based on an integrated and strategic approach, are risk-aware and evidence-based, and contribute to the achievement of its strategic priorities.
- It has robust procedures and controls in place to ensure that resources are used appropriately and effectively, and are not misused.
- It works with its partners to maximise the use of their respective resources to achieve shared priorities and outcomes.

It is important to note that all of the privately owned properties affected by RAAC in Balnagask were originally acquired by private individuals under the Right to Buy scheme (formerly under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987) and were purchased on a full repairing and insuring basis. The ongoing responsibility for maintenance and structural integrity rests with the private owner. There is no statutory obligation on the Council to undertake or fund repairs to these privately owned properties. Any voluntary assistance provided must be strictly within the scope of discretionary powers and supported by a lawful funding mechanism.

The Council's current approach, offering voluntary acquisition at current Market Value, with additional home loss payments, disturbance allowances, and coverage of reasonable legal and professional fees – is consistent with the compensation principles set out in the Acquisition of Land (Authorisation Procedure) (Scotland) Act 1947, the Land Compensation (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Compulsory Purchase of Land (Scotland) Regulations 2003. This approach satisfies both the Council's statutory obligations and its Best Value duty. By contrast, requests for full remediation funding, compensation for non-financial loss, or valuation based on hypothetical "pre-RAAC" market conditions have no basis in law and would represent unlawful expenditure of public funds.

Procurement Regulations

Where the Council considers commissioning works to privately owned homes e.g. through coordinated roof replacement or remedial action, it must do so in full compliance with its statutory procurement obligations. The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, together with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, set out the legal framework for how the Council must procure goods, works and services.

Any procurement over the relevant threshold values must be conducted in a transparent, fair and competitive manner. The Council is prohibited from awarding contracts to individuals or companies without a compliant procurement process, unless a specific exemption applies. This means that any remedial scheme or construction programme – including those suggested by campaign groups – must be subject to lawful tendering, open competition and appropriate contract oversight.

In addition, where the Council facilitates works to private property, it must ensure that the contract arrangements properly reflect the underlying legal responsibility for those works. In the absence of a statutory duty to repair private homes, any Council-led intervention must be carefully structured to avoid implying that the Council has accepted legal or financial liability. This includes ensuring that appropriate agreements are in place with owners, that cost contributions are secured where required, and that risks around warranties, liability/obligations and insurance are addressed.

The Council must also take into account its obligations under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Under this regime, the Council must not provide selective financial assistance to a business (such as a private landlord) in a manner that would distort or potentially distort competition or

investment. Where the Council proposes to provide financial assistance – such as loans, equity shares, or funding of remedial works – it must assess whether that assistance constitutes a subsidy and, if so, whether it falls within a permitted exemption or required notification. Any failure to comply with subsidy control or procurement law may render the Council's actions unlawful and expose it to legal challenge. These constraints form a material limitation on what can lawfully be offered to homeowners and must be fully considered in determining the viability of proposed options.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the "2010 Act"). This duty requires the Council, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between individuals who share protected characteristics and those who do not. Protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, race and others. The duty applies not only to the direct delivery of services but also to policy decisions, allocation of resources, and strategic planning.

In addition, the Council must comply with the Fairer Scotland Duty, which is imposed under Part 1 of the 2010 Act and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2018. This duty requires the Council to actively consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

However, these duties are procedural in nature. They do not confer individual entitlements or require specific outcomes, such as full compensation or remediation funded by the Council. Rather, they require the Council to give due regard to relevant equality considerations and to take reasonable, proportionate steps to mitigate disadvantage where possible, within the scope of its legal powers and financial constraints.

The Council has already taken steps to meet these duties by engaging with campaign groups, conducting impact assessments, and offering voluntary acquisition terms that go beyond the statutory minimum. Nonetheless, the Council must also consider the interests of other equality groups, including Council tenants, those in housing need, and residents in other areas of the City. Providing enhanced or exceptional terms to one group of private owners – to the exclusion of others – may itself raise equity concerns and would not, without lawful justification, be consistent with the Council's broader public sector equality obligations.

Powers under the Local Government Act and Housing Acts

The Council's ability to intervene in matters relating to privately owned housing is governed by a combination of general and specific statutory powers. The primary source of the Council's general competence is Section 20 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, which allows a local authority to do anything it considers likely to promote or improve the wellbeing of its area and persons within it. However, this general power is not unlimited. It must be exercised in accordance with other legal duties, including the statutory Best Value obligation, the Council's fiduciary duty to taxpayers, and the constraints imposed by other relevant legislation such as procurement law, housing law, and subsidy control regulations. It cannot be used to justify open-ended or inequitable expenditure, particularly where this would contradict more specific statutory frameworks.

In relation to housing, the Council has powers under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 to acquire land, including by agreement or compulsorily, for the purposes of providing housing accommodation or improving housing conditions. These powers are discretionary and subject to strict legal tests. In cases where compulsory purchase is proposed, the Council must demonstrate a compelling case in the public interest, supported by a viable and funded redevelopment scheme. Any acquisition must be accompanied by compensation in

accordance with legislation. The law does not permit compensation based on hypothetical “pre-RAAC” values, nor does it provide for generalised payments for perceived unfairness.

The Council also holds certain powers under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (the “2006 Act”), which enable enforcement action where private housing falls below tolerable standards or presents a danger to occupants. These powers include the ability to serve work notices or undertake work in default, with costs recoverable from owners. In extreme cases, the Council may also consider declaring a Housing Renewal Area under Schedule 1 of the 2006 Act, although this is generally reserved for wider-scale interventions and would require formal consultation and approval.

The Council does not have a statutory duty to repair or upgrade privately owned homes, regardless of structural condition. Any intervention, including the coordination of roof replacement schemes or financial assistance, must therefore be framed as a discretionary action and supported by a clear legal basis, appropriate governance, and affordability. Such support, if offered, must also be conditional on owner participation and proportionate contribution, in line with principles of equity and public accountability.

Legal responsibilities as former owners of the RAAC affected properties

The Council’s previous ownership of the properties at Balnagask does not give rise to any continuing legal responsibility for their condition. Once a property is sold under the Right to Buy scheme (historically governed by the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987), full title, including all repairing obligations, transfers to the purchaser. These sales were completed on a full repairing basis, with no warranties or guarantees provided by the Council regarding the long-term structural condition of the building, including the presence of RAAC.

There is no legal principle in Scots property or housing law that imposes ongoing liability on a local authority merely because it once owned a property. The legal responsibility for repair lies with the current owner, regardless of who previously held title. This remains the case even where the property was originally built or maintained by the Council. Additionally, many of the affected properties have since been sold on to new owners through open market transactions.

While the Council acknowledges the disruption and uncertainty faced by affected owners, it is important to be clear that any assistance now offered is a matter of policy and discretion, not a legal obligation. The decision to engage with owners and explore supportive measures reflects the Council’s commitment to community wellbeing and public safety, but it does not represent an acceptance of liability or a precedent for wider responsibility in relation to former Council housing stock.

Building Standards responsibilities

The Council has statutory duties as a verifier under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, these responsibilities include the verification and approval of building warrant applications, the inspection of works carried out under those warrants, and the enforcement of compliance with the Building Regulations. These functions are regulatory in nature and would apply to the replacement of any dwelling roofs including those affected by RAAC.

Building owners are responsible for preventing their buildings falling into a dangerous condition. In the context of RAAC, where it appears to the council that, for whatever reason a building owner has failed in their duty to fulfil this responsibility, the council has the power to protect the public/persons from danger.

Sections 29 and 30 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, include powers to protect the public from dangerous buildings with a duty for local authorities to act immediately. In addition the powers allow local authorities to serve a notice on building owners to reduce or remove any dangers within set commencement and completion dates. In an emergency incident the local

authority can undertake work to remove the danger including erecting a cordon/securing a building to maintain public safety.

Under sections 42 and 43, an evacuation notice can be served to building occupiers if there is an imminent danger.

The local authority can also recover any costs of work, when they take action, from the building owner through their usual debt recovery procedures or by registering a charging order.

Financial considerations

Consideration was given as to how best to fund works associated with RAAC in a previous Report to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 30 May 2024 entitled RAAC Funding Update ([F&C 24/154](#)) This Report highlighted the funding options open to the Council.

In addition the [Council on 5 March 2025](#) at the Budget Meeting approved the use of the Capital Fund to support any financial implications arising from Council's support to owners of properties affected by RAAC and that they will be the sole responsibility of the General Fund.

The impact of using the Capital Fund resources to fund the costs of supporting owners of RAAC affected properties is that these monies are one-off in nature and once consumed cannot be used for other things, for example supporting the Council's Capital Programme. This impacts the Council by either limiting the number or scale of capital projects that can be progressed or increases the value that has to be borrowed, which in turn increases the cost of servicing/repaying that borrowing and interest charges. With a projected General Fund budget gap in future years additional costs will only increase these gaps and decisions will have to be taken to balance the budget, by increasing Council Tax, raising prices, or by making budget savings, stopping or reducing services, for example. The funding solution is not a budget it is a redirection of money that could be used for other purposes.

4. Objectives

The objective of this Viability Assessment is to consider the viability of the alternative proposals presented by homeowners to determine if any of these options could be presented for consideration by Council.

The primary objectives for Aberdeen City Council are;

1. Negate the Health and Safety issues with the properties
2. Provide clarity for owners on available options to assist their decision making and positive wellbeing
3. Ensure mechanisms are in place to ensure affordability of any further options for owners given that they advise that they do not have the resources to fund up-front costs
4. Identify a solution(s) that causes the least harm to homeowners
5. Identify a solution(s) that takes account of the topography of the site and allows masterplanning and planned demolition of redundant stock to be taken forward
6. Lessen the financial impact on Aberdeen City Council, domestic rate payers and the Housing Revenue Account given that no additional resources have been made available to the Council.
7. In so far as possible present options that provide an equitable outcome for homeowners regardless of which option might work for them i.e. an owner wouldn't have a better financial position than another dependant on the option that they chose. In keeping with

our Public Equality Duty, consideration should also be given to how vulnerable groups across the city may be disadvantaged as a result of the options presented.

The primary objectives for Owners (drawn from discussions at the first workshop):

- a) Be able to live in a safe, free from risk home
- b) Negate financial loss as far as possible*
- c) Have certainty around next steps and associated timescales to enable them to move on.

** at the second workshop with the TCRC, the Group requested that the second owner objective be changed to reflect that they would have **no financial loss** from the proposals, and agreed that these are the primary objectives for owners.*

As a result, each proposal has been scored against the following criteria to help determine the strength and therefore viability of the proposal:

1. Option would quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners (scored out of 5 given the risk to owners)
2. Option would mitigate financial loss to owners (scored out of 5 given the risk being reported by owners)
3. Option would enable masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock (scored out of 5 given decisions already taken by Council and commitments made to tenants)
4. Option would mitigate the financial costs to Aberdeen City Council, domestic rate payers and the Housing Revenue Account (scored out of 5 given the need for the Council to comply with best value principles)
5. Option is deliverable (to include practicalities and availability of suitably qualified personnel to oversee works etc.) and scored out of 10 given the instruction to present viable options for consideration by Council.

5. Scope

The scope of this Viability Assessment is to consider the detail of each proposal against the criteria above and provide an officer assessment of viability for consideration by Elected Members.

For transparency, scorings provided by the Torry Community RAAC Campaign (TCRC) Group and any submitted justification for the scores have been included in green.

TCRC Group clarifications

The TCRC Group request was made on the assumption that all costs will be met by Aberdeen City Council in relation to the re-roofing proposals or ex-cambion proposals. Within the re-roofing option the Group have assumed that no remediation works will be required and therefore the only costs incurred will be for roof replacement. Within the ex-cambion option the Group has assumed that owners will be compensated to the value of their property on a special assumption that the roof does not contain RAAC. They have also requested that compensation/ home loss payments will be made.

Officers have considered the full range of constraints and statutory duties in formulating the proposals outlined in this Viability Assessment.

5.1 Out of Scope

- RAAC properties owned by ACC/HRA being brought back into use for Council housing (this reflecting the Council decision of 21 August 2024).
- The Council being able to offer market value on the special assumption that the properties do not contain RAAC (this being contradictory to Council decisions).
- Funding for environmental retrofit given that there may be opportunities available to home owners for environmental retrofit that are not available to the Council.

6. Viability Appraisal

6.1 Option 1 – Do Nothing / do minimum

Description	<p>Previous Committee Reporting has identified that Do-nothing is not considered a viable option for the individual properties or site, having established that it was not viable for the Housing Revenue Account to undertake the required upgrading and re-roofing of the Council Stock which was built in the mid 1960's.</p> <p>The Council stock was in the region of 360 units within the 504 units on site. The 138 privately owned properties were all originally acquired by owners under the 'right to buy' legislation. Of the 138 units, we understand that less than 30 are still owned by a former council tenant. The remainder will all have been sold at least once. Original right to buy sale would have been at market value but subject to discounts depending on tenants circumstances. Historic information suggests sale prices between £10,000 and £65,000, with subsequent sales noted in registers of Scotland recorded as up to £135,000.</p> <p>If the Council were not taking the actions they are currently proposing, the following action/ implications are possible:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Owners would remain in properties and would have difficulty in undertaking any repair and upgrading works required to deal with the health and safety issues. 2. This would have significant impact on the individual owners in relation to their general wellbeing and financial impact. 3. The council would be unable to take forward the demolition and redevelopment works on terraces that contained owners, sterilising significant parts of the site. 4. Parts of the site being sterilised would result in the risk of antisocial behaviour and site security issues over an extended period of time. 5. The council would require to incur ongoing costs in relation to site maintenance/ security/ building protection etc. 6. The Council will at some stage, subject to ongoing condition assessments, require regulatory services to manage the health and safety issues associated with the RAAC roofs. 7. It is foreseeable that in 'terraces where there is majority ownership owners could decide to undertake their own roof replacement/ support/ investment works and the Council would be required to contribute to shared costs. 8. It is also foreseeable that if no action is taken, the Market Value of the properties will drop significantly from the current position (it should be noted that it is unlikely that anyone other than the council would acquire the properties at this time and any value that could be obtained at say auction would be significantly less than the current council offer). <p>The above points are listed for noting purposes but reflect that the option to do nothing does not meet the criteria for either the Council or owners.</p>
Expected Costs	<p>Not known at this time.</p> <p>Financial cost likely to be less</p> <p>Social costs will be more than other options</p>

Expected Benefits	N/A
Risks Specific to this Option	<p>There is a high likelihood that owners will remain living in properties which are likely to have a high risk in relation to IStructE guidance.</p> <p>Recent surveys of newly acquired properties have been independently assessed under the same guidance as the original properties. The condition and level of risk identified in these properties is consistent with the condition and risks identified in previous surveys of Council owned properties. To further clarify, at this point no property has been deemed to be at critical risk.</p>
Advantages & Disadvantages	N/A
Viability	<p>This is not a viable option, primarily due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous decision of Council to support homeowners - The health and safety risk presented by RAAC in private homes is not mitigated - The financial and wellbeing impact of 'do nothing' would have a detrimental impact on homeowners. - The likelihood that this option would sterilise the site and there would be no future development - Doing nothing would inevitably lead to enforcement action.
Other Points	N/A

6.2 Option 2 – Voluntary Acquisition at Market Value (ACC)

Description

In order to assist owners with an option, the Council instructed officers in August 2024 to establish a voluntary acquisition process with owners whose homes have been affected by RAAC in Balnagask. This allows owners to sell their house to the council and move elsewhere, with the council taking responsibility for the homes thereafter. The relevant committee instruction was:-

*2.6 Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer Finance to take forward negotiations with private owners to acquire their properties **voluntarily at Market Value**, noting that this will be a valuation of the property at the current date and be on the same basis as the CPO process. In addition to Market Value the council will be willing to meet **reasonable legal and professional costs** along with **home loss** and **disturbance** payments.*

Approach to Valuation

In order to deliver on this instruction the Council engaged with the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) to engage with owners and independently assess the Market Value and heads of claim with each owner. To date 67 owners have received offers. The Valuation Office Agency have provided the Council with a Land Cost estimate. This is an estimate of the total costs the Council will have to incur to voluntarily acquire the properties at Market Value.

The estimated cost includes an allowance for the following items

- Land taken (the market value of the properties)
- Home loss payments (10% of value – max £15k)
- Disturbance (moving costs etc.)
- Agents fees (property advisors etc.)
- Contingencies (15%)
- ACC fees

The total estimated cost to acquire properties under this option is approx. £12.7 million. Of this £9.89 million relates to 'land taken'. Home loss, disturbance and agents fees estimated at £1.13 million. The remainder being contingencies and ACC fees.

RAAC's Effect on Valuation

The VOA have adopted an approach where they have made a deduction for RAAC roof replacement in properties. They have considered information provided by the ACC professional team but have also taken their own cost advice.

Officers have been advised that the following deductions have been made:

Type of Property	Number	RAAC Deduction	Total Deduction
1 bed ground	18	*20k	£360k
1 bed first floor	19	*20k	£380k
3 bed	86	37k	£3,182k
4 bed	15	44k	£660k
	138		£4,582k

*1 bed properties have a larger roof area/ costs split between parties.

Other Factors affecting Valuation

The Market Valuations that have been undertaken by the VOA reflect the value at the current date. This reflects a wide range of Market Factors and also reflect a softening of the Market. Regardless of the impact of RAAC within the properties the value of the properties will be less than it was in say Summer 2023. Individual valuations will also reflect the level of investment in properties and other condition factors.

Impact of Voluntary Acquisition on Owners.

The approach taken by Council has allowed all owners to be given the opportunity to sell their property as it stands, in current condition and benefit from some certainty albeit the difficulties some owners will have in relation to the difference in their offer compared to historic values and commitments is not underestimated.

The following highlights some of the impacts from the process:-

Impacts from voluntary process	Comparison with 'normal' private sale or buy back
RAAC is considered as part of the process	RAAC would be considered. Any new purchaser would have difficulty obtaining a mortgage etc.
Whilst voluntary, owners are considering valuations at a time when market values have also dropped	In other circumstances owners may wait to sell at the best time for them.
Current process covers all reasonable professional fees	Owners would meet costs for Home Report and solicitors fees in both selling their home and onward purchase. Estate Agency fees would also be met by the seller.
Current process includes disbursements cost	All disbursements would require to be met by the owner along with warranties on appliances etc.
Current process includes home loss payments	No home loss payment.

Whilst not all the factors have equal weighting in the table above, it highlights some of the issues for owners. The valuation advice shows that the presence RAAC on the properties represents a negative impact on value in the region of £4.6 million.

The offer from the Council when contingencies and other payments to owners are considered is equivalent to £2.785 million in addition to the market value.

While the Council offers Market value, the process needs to reflect best value for the Council. The Council has some discretion in this matter, but it is important to understand that the market value must balance fairness to owners with the Council's responsible use of public funds, the value of a cleared site and potential financial impacts on all council tax payers across the city.

	<p>Update with Voluntary Acquisition process</p> <p>To date 67 offers have been made by the VOA to Homeowners. The council are only made aware of the detail of offers at the point that offers are accepted by owners</p> <p>To date 13 offers have been accepted by owners and 4 of those have concluded and are now in council ownership. Offers for properties, that the council are currently aware of range from £34,000 to over £100,000. Some offers currently only reflect the Land Acquisition and home loss payment (10% of valuation up to £15,000), with fees and other disbursements still to be agreed.</p>
Expected Costs	<p>A land cost estimate has been prepared by the Valuation Office Agency that sets out the voluntary acquisition process for all privately owned properties in Balnagask in excess of £12.7 million. This figure includes land acquisition, disturbance payments, home loss payments and an allowance for professional fees.</p> <p>Once the properties are acquired by the Council there will be additional cost to the council to make safe, manage, secure and clear and landscape the area until a masterplan is in place and the site is redeveloped. An additional £10 million has been made available for these works at this time.</p> <p>The funding solution for acquisition reflect the market valuation of the site as it currently is. The redevelopment value of the site will be less than this.</p> <p>At this time, once costs to clear the site and prepare it for future redevelopment are considered, there is no viable development opportunity without further grant support.</p>

Scoring of option	Criteria	Officer score
	Quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners	2/5
	Mitigate financial loss to owners	3/5
	Enable masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock	2/5
	Mitigate the financial costs to Aberdeen City Council, Domestic Rate Payers and to the Housing Revenue Account	1/5
	Deliverability	5/10
	Total score for Option 13/30	
	Justification for scoring: <div>1. Many owners have been keen to await an improved offer from either Government or the Council, this is contributing to delayed decision making by owners.</div> <div>2. Despite ACC offering the highest value possible within financial regulations, owners are generally not content with the value being offered and would prefer to be offered 'pre-RAAC Market Value'. Although the additional payments made for home loss, disturbance and professional fees do very nearly close the gap to 'Pre RAAC values, the declining housing market and in some cases, condition of properties is further impacting on the value offered to owners. As a result, owners don't anticipate being able to purchase an alternative property and this is of particular concern to those who are nearing retirement.</div> <div>3. Demolition plans are in place, these have been phased to take account of when homes come into Council ownership.</div> <div>4. The £12.7m and additional £10m for demolition and landscaping will have to be fully met by the Council and therefore the taxpayer.</div> <div>5. A process is already in place and the Council has secured properties through the process. However, some owners are choosing not to engage (as outlined under 1.)</div>	

Expected Benefits/Disbenefits that informed the scoring.

Benefits:

- This option negates the health and safety risk to owners, although is proving to take some time.
- This option partially mitigates the financial risk to owners by offering home loss, disturbance and professional fees.
- This option enables the Council (in the long term) to provide modern standard homes that meet current building standards and will have a lifetime similar to all other new build properties and provide long term value for the HRA account.
- Older Council homes closer to the end of their economic life are replaced with new homes that will support the HRA and tenants in years to come.
- The VOA Office are fully instructed and the Council has successfully purchased properties from owners, this therefore continues to be a viable option.

Disbenefits

- The Market Value of the properties is less than anticipated by owners due both to the presence of RAAC but also to the downturn in the local market
- Some residents are nearing retirement, and cannot foresee being able to afford to purchase another property with the value being offered and this is impacting on owner wellbeing
- On top of the demolition costs, there is the high capital cost of the new build properties.
- Without engagement from owners demolition work on individual terraces and redevelopment cannot proceed.
- An agreement on purchasing their property requires to be negotiated and this takes time.
- While this process is ongoing, there will be an ongoing management and maintenance liability to prevent dereliction and anti-social behaviour
- The need to engage with design consultants and statutory colleagues to develop a masterplan for a new estate will incur time and cost which will delay the process. It will likely be several years before the new housing is completed.

TCRC Group Scores of Option 2

Criteria	TCRC Scores
Quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners	0/5
No financial loss to owners	0/5
Enable Masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock	0/5
Mitigate the financial loss to the Council, Domestic Rate Payers and to the Housing Revenue Account	0/5
Deliverability	0/10
Total	0/30

Risks Specific to this Option	<p>Risk of owners not engaging with the VOA due to compensation expectations not being met, leading ultimately to owners being served with statutory notices due to the health and safety risk.</p> <p>Risk of continuing misinformation about the potential use of the homes impacted by RAAC.</p> <p>Risk of a future deterioration of panels whilst process is ongoing. Significant deterioration would require the Council to consider enforcement action.</p> <p>Risk to owner wellbeing, which is being partially mitigated by the commissioning of SAMH, however, the uncertainty around next steps is of particular concern to owners and the misinformation is impacting mental health and wellbeing.</p>
Viability	<p>Having considered the feasibility, benefits and risks, alongside the scoring, this is deemed a viable option.</p>

6.3 Option 3 - Exchange for another property in Balnagask - roof off, roof on (TCRC)	
Description	<p>This proposal would see home owners* being able to stay in their home and live in a RAAC free property with a new roof or alternatively agreeing to move to a similar property in an alternative location within the immediate community.</p> <p>* The term owners is used to describe all owners including private landlords</p> <p>The council could co-ordinate a replacement roof on a number of individual properties within a cluster(s) of properties either on behalf of owners or on vacant council owned properties. The properties with replaced roofs could then be exchanged with those belonging to homeowners elsewhere on the site.</p> <p>Upon identifying suitable properties for retrofit (based on the topography of the site, volume of suitably sized properties, volume of homes in private ownership and ability to mitigate risk to future masterplanning), ACC would engage with the owners, reach legal agreement over transfer of title at a set point in time and, thereafter, through a mechanism to be agreed, to effect removal of all RAAC panels from each dwelling and replace these with a prefabricated, insulated cassette roof.</p> <p>Where private owners' houses are already contained within a 'cluster' area they could either choose to retain title of that property and have the RAAC removed and new roof fitted under the mechanism to be agreed, or move to an alternative property, which has already had the remedial works completed and titles in those respective properties be exchanged.</p> <p>Proposal from officers to make this a viable option</p> <p>Owners have been clear to officers that all circumstances are different and that many do not have the upfront resource to fund the level of works required to remove RAAC from properties. Officers are of the view that</p>

there are considerable additional costs to consider, given the costs of running the programme of works and inevitable remediation works required to make good any damage resulting from the roof replacement to ensure that homeowners can settle in safe homes. These additional costs, outwith the cost of the roof replacement, have guided officer thinking.

Officers are also aware that they have a fiduciary duty in protecting public spend and in identifying solutions that are fair and equitable to all parties and respect that owners have a responsibility for their properties. Officers are aware that there is an opportunity cost to all Council spend which Elected Members will have to consider when making an decision.

Officers have therefore proposed the following mechanisms for the delivery of this option to the TCRC Group. Officers propose that the costs in bold italics be met by the Council and that the Council assume responsibility for delivery of the programme.

A. Owners stay in own home – Owners decant on a temporary basis to allow the roof of their home to be replaced, and then move back to their own home.

Process to be followed to implement A above.

- i. ACC formally write to all homeowners and ask if they are interested in this option (roof on/ roof off). ACC collate all information and look at which 'blocks' may be suitable for process.
- ii. ***Legal agreement to instruct council as agent.***
- iii. ***Schedule and scope of work/ RAMS agreed with owner (this would assess the unintended consequences of roof replacement works for example electrical upgrades required and clarify responsibility for costs).***
- iii. ***Statutory consents etc. for works***
- iv. ***Schedule of property condition undertaken***
- v. Meter readings etc. agreed
- vi. ***Decant property solution identified***
- vii. Timetable of work agreed
- viii. Works to protect existing fittings/ belongings during works
 - a. Assumption that all property is packed up and stored
 - b. ***Packing up and moving to storage container on site***
- ix. ***Owner moves to decant space home already completed/ hotel/ friends and family)***
- x. Building handed over to contractor
- xi. Work undertaken to replace roof
- xii. ***Redecoration works to address damaged items as a result of roof replacement***
- xiv. ***Deep clean***
- xv. ***Schedule of property condition reviewed***

- xvi. Meter readings etc. agreed
- xvii. **Checks for re-occupation of property (gas/ electrics etc.)**
- xviii. **All certification of works made available (warranties etc.)**
- xix. Owner re-occupies property.

The cost of the option noted above would require to be agreed with each owner. In considering the cost implications and to try and make the option equitable and therefore viable, **it is proposed that each owner is asked to make a contribution to the costs of this option by funding the costs of the actual roof replacement.** It is proposed that this would be capped at the discount made to arrive at the Market Value of the property as determined by the VOA*. It should be noted that this is less than estimates prepared by the Council professional team but is being used for transparency and consistency with other options.

Recognising the difficulty of some owners in meeting costs on an upfront basis, it is proposed that the following mechanisms be considered for owners to meet their share of costs:

- a. Owners meet costs on completion of works
- b. Owners are offered a loan by the council to pay for their contribution towards the works (loan would be secured against the property – 2nd ranking).
- c. Owners are unable to meet cost and instead of contributing the Council would share equity in the property.

Issues specific to option A or costs still to be identified;

- Grant / loan mechanism will require to be developed
- Contract risk (fixed price to owner/ ACC to carry contract risk)
- Damage to property fitting and fixtures during works or whilst roof is off.
- Cost for betterment (upgrades to be agreed on an individual basis with costs met by owners)
- Cost that comes from safety checks – gas/ electric upgrades
- Lenders consent and costs
- Utilities and domestic rates
- Mechanism for shared equity to be further established.
- Impact of Council having a second ranking security on some properties.

*Flatted dwelling would meet 50% of roof costs.

- B. Owners move into property of same size but currently owned by the Council** - Owners agree to exchange their property for another within a terrace of properties where a decision is made to commit to roof replacement. Vacant properties are brought up to the current minimum letting standard and in exchange for the title to the owners current property, they are given title to the property. The affected owner would have to contribute to the costs of roof replacement in the same way as owners who are able to return to their existing property. Council would offer the same level of

support as outlined in A above, along with a one off payment of £5,000 to meet costs to turn the property into their new home.

Process to be followed to implement B

- As A above
- Availability of previous repairs information would be required
- ***Properties brought to minimum letting standard (this may vary but would be subject to individual negotiation)***
- Allocations of properties requires further exploration with the community. They have suggested that all interested parties bid for properties and names are randomly selected.
- ***Additional legal costs and transfer of title***
- ***Transfer of mortgage, process for contribution to roof works, 2nd ranking securities etc.***

Other delivery considerations

Some owners advise that they will find it challenging to maintain mortgage costs and pay for rent whilst the works are being undertaken. As a result, it is proposed that a small number of properties have remedial action undertaken in the first instance so that those RAAC free properties can be utilised to support decant arrangements where required (or alternative decant arrangements are considered).

Expectations of owners – proposal and subsequent views.

Within the proposal made by owners The Group has noted that the Council has identified the cost to voluntarily acquire properties to be in excess of £12 million and they are therefore of the view that any solution that results in the Council's commitment being less than £12million would be 'best value' for the Council. In addition the Council would save on demolition, site servicing, landscaping costs etc. The Group note that any recharge to owners would be a disincentive.

Where the Council feel there will be significant additional costs to roof replacement costs as a result of works this view is not shared by the TCRC Group who feel that Council figures are risk averse and that all costs should be met by the Council or the option is potentially worse for owners that the Voluntary Acquisition process. The Group also believe that owners should be entitled to a home loss payment equal to 10% of the valuation of their property as well as a disturbance allowance for reasonable costs involved in the moving between properties.

The TCRC Group have also suggested that an independent body be established to oversee the works. The council would fund body and allow the body to take decisions around the works, funding, specification and procurement routes.

The Group suggests that some form of block grant to a body, which is set up to oversee the project, would enable the works to be carried out in a cost-effective and timeous manner providing proper governance, value for money and saving the Council around £2-3m from the costs that it would incur if all owners were to agree to the Voluntary Acquisition scheme. The Group believed that a saving of £2-3m to the Council would clearly constitute 'Best Value'. Block grants are awarded by Council to other

	external bodies to assist with their functioning so the group feels that such an arrangement could also apply in respect of this proposal.	
Expected Costs	<p>This option assumes that roof costs will be met by owners but not necessarily through an upfront payment. Payment made as noted in the option.</p> <p>It is proposed that the contribution from owners be capped at a level with the Council taking any risk above this. The level is based on the allowance being made by the VOA to ensure equity with other solutions. Costs estimates may reduce through a competitive tender process.</p> <p>Current allowance being used by the VOA for roof replacement for each property type are:</p> <p>4 bedroom property - £44,000*</p> <p>3 bedroom property - £37,000*</p> <p>1 bed property (flatted) - £20,000* (this is the 50% share of £40,000)</p> <p>*this reflects the assumptions made by the valuation office agency in the negotiated sales process and are lower than Council cost estimates.</p> <p>In relation to costs incurred by the Council this is more difficult to define at this stage. This would however include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project management costs - Legal costs - Decant removal and storage costs - Property re-instatement costs - Statutory consents - Schedule of works/ condition - Deep clean - Safety checks - Vacant properties to minimum letting standard - Mortgage/ security costs - Managing allocations process <p>Initial estimates suggest the Council should consider a value of between £30k and £40k per home.</p> <p>If this was pursued the council should make an allowance of up to £10.5 million for this option in upfront costs.</p> <p>Cost contributions from owners could further reduce this figure.</p> <p>The Council would also make savings in demolition, landscaping, site clearance and rebuild costs.</p>	
Scoring of option	Criteria	Officer Score

	1. Quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners	1/5
	2. Mitigate financial loss to owners	4/5
	3. Enable masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock	1/5
	4. Mitigate the financial costs to Aberdeen City Council, domestic rate payers and to the Housing Revenue Account	3/5
	5. Deliverability	4/10
	Total score for Option 13/30	
	Justification for scoring: <div><div>1. This option could take some time to establish given the need to follow strict procurement processes and continue to comply with all financial regulations. This could potentially lengthen the time an owner remains in a RAAC impacted property.</div><div>2. The financial losses to owners are thought to be reduced by this option, and owners would continue to own their own property in Balnagask.</div><div>3. This option would make masterplanning more difficult, as the terraces with replacement roofs would require to be worked around as part of any redevelopment.</div><div>4. This option would help mitigate the risk to the Council and to tax payers.</div><div>5. This option may help owners to engage with the Council to progress an option, but would require a significant on-going investment of resource to deliver over a period of time. The option is complex.</div></div>	
Expected Benefits/Disbenefits that informed the scoring.	Benefits <div><div>• Affected residents to retain homeownership by exchanging their properties, where required, for equivalent council-owned homes, which would be made 'RAAC free'.</div><div>• The assembly of a contiguous site of sufficient size to meet the ACC scheme's objectives.</div><div>• A reduction in demolition and displacement, aligning the development with human rights and proportionality principles.</div><div>• Engagement with the community would suggest that this option would better support owners mental health and wellbeing</div><div>• Owners may feel more able to commit to this option and therefore have certainty about the future.</div><div>• The option reduces potential outlay by the Council which will result in a reduction in financial liability and impact on other service delivery, council tax levels etc.</div></div>	

Disbenefits

- Programme duration increases risk to building condition deteriorating which could result in statutory enforcement action being required.
- TCRC Group have indicated that they would not expect owners to have to contribute to works and believe there should be no cost to owners.
- At this stage it is unclear what interest there would be in this option. Approval to be able to proceed would be required before this could be offered to owners.
- Complexity of the coordination of allocations, decant, moves etc
- Equity in the allocations process
- More complex site for redevelopment
- Considerable ACC staffing resource required to oversee the programme which could impact on the work of the Council.
- Risk for Council in that equity or loan may not be covered by future value and costs to establish scheme.

TCRC Group Scores for Option 3.

Criteria	TCRC scores
Quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners	3/5
No financial loss to owners	0/5
Enable Masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock	4/5
Mitigate the financial loss to the Council, Domestic Rate Payers and to the Housing Revenue Account	4/5
Deliverability	7/10 or 0/10
Total	18/30 or 11/30

The TCRC Group provided the following justification for their scoring of this option:

- Financial loss to owners resulting from being expected to pay for roof which financially is no better than option 2 w.r.t. VA.
- Less home loss payment and disturbance allowance (£5,000) than statutorily entitled to under CPO regulations.
- The most favourable mitigation is to the benefit of ACC, who will have to pay far less under this option than under VA, at the expense of the owners, which is clearly inequitable.
- With the correct funding arrangement in place as per the TCRC option this would be completely deliverable, hence the score of 7/10. However, if the report limits the funding support as described at our meeting to improvements only with owners having to pay for the roof replacement then the deliverability score reduces to Zero.
- The deliverability will also be improved if ACC is creative with the funding mechanism and the project execution since, whilst they remain under the control of ACC staff, bureaucracy and delays will hamper the smooth operation of the project. If an innovative

	<p>structure is found that meets ACC governance requirements, whilst removing day to day management of the project from its auspices, the project will benefit from this by expediently delivering the desired outcomes.</p>
Risks Specific to this Option	<p>This option cannot be delivered in any terrace where an individual owner is not prepared to engage in the process.</p> <p>Owners who are offered a home in an alternative location on site, may feel aggrieved and rather their own home be subject to roof replacement.</p> <p>Given that the land would not be available for future development, this would be required to be considered from a best value perspective.</p> <p>Owners who are keen to take advantage of this option, may deem that their properties are safe to live in during the works.</p> <p>TCRC Group have indicated that an option where owners are asked to contribute is not acceptable to them.</p> <p>Officers would have to consider the resource required to deliver implement and manage a process and project of this scale.</p>
Viability	<p>The assessment has indicated that this is a viable option as it may have benefits for owners and benefits for the council in terms of wider engagement and a slightly lower cost commitment.</p> <p>A firmer understanding of the number of owners who are keen to secure this offer is required to progress. If owners do not commit to contributing to costs this will not be a viable option.</p>

Option 4 - Swap (Ex-cambion) for another property of equal value (TCRC)	
Description	<p>ACC currently own a number of properties in shared blocks within which ACC is a minority owner. Some of these properties are currently void or classified as unable to be re-let (UTBR). This may be due to limited demand for the property type, excessive repair requirements etc.</p> <p>The management of such properties can be more onerous due to arrangements for repairs and other shared costs having to be coordinated. As a consequence an opportunity exists for ACC to make these properties available for excambion/ swap with owners.</p> <p>The council would identify these properties if there was interest and provide a property schedule with a valuation on each of the properties. Owners that have had their property valued by the VOA could then ask to swap their properties for properties where the Council has minority ownership.</p>

	<p>The transaction would be on the basis of Market Value, with the owner meeting any difference in value (or being paid any difference by the council). If the owner was unable to meet the difference in value the Council could assist through either an equity stake in the property or a loan arrangement similar to the previous option.</p> <p>Each property would be transferred (as seen) due to the Market Value taking account of the current condition of the property.</p> <p>The range of payments currently available to owners in relation to home loss disturbance, fees etc. would be available to owners.</p> <p>The Torry Community RAAC Campaign Group have indicated that less home owners are keen to access this option, but a few, particularly those keen to downsize, may welcome this option. The option may also be attractive to those able to upgrade and renovate properties themselves.</p> <p>They have also indicated that they would expect to see the valuation of the owners properties to reflect 'pre-raac' valuations. This would be difficult to support in terms of being equitable with other options.</p> <p>Process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. ACC formally write to all homeowners and ask if they are interested in this option ii. ACC identify voids that are minority owned flats in council ownership currently of letting standard condition iii. <i>Allocations process agreed with interested parties</i> iv. Property identified for individual interested parties v. Schedule of property condition undertaken vi. Scope of property transaction agreed vii. Meter readings etc. agreed viii. Moving date agreed ix. Owner occupies new property.
Expected Costs	<p>This option assumes that an owners current property will be exchanged for another of equal value. As a result, hard to let Council stock will be reduced.</p> <p>Any difference in value will be met by either party, for example if the new home identified has a greater value than the current home, the owner will be asked to fund the difference in value or vice versa.</p> <p>In relation to costs incurred by the Council this would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project management costs - Legal costs - Removal costs - Deep clean - Safety checks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mortgage/ security costs - Managing allocations process <p>Initial estimates suggest that this option would be comparable with the voluntary acquisition model. The HRA would require to be compensated for the loss of stock.</p>	
Scoring of option	Criteria	Officer Score
	1. Quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners	4/5
	2. Mitigate financial loss to owners	4/5
	3. Enable masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock	4/5
	4. Mitigate the financial costs to Aberdeen City Council, domestic rate payers and to the Housing Revenue Account	3/5
	5. Deliverability	8/10
	Total score for Option 23/30	
	Justification for scoring: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This option could be formalised in a relatively short period following committee instruction. This could potentially reduce the length of time an owner remains in a RAAC impacted property. 2. The financial losses to owners are thought to be reduced by this option. Owners would continue to own a property. 3. This option would make masterplanning more feasible as the terraces would return into council ownership so would not be required to be worked around as part of any redevelopment. 4. This option would mitigate a level of risk to the Council and to tax payers. 5. This option may help owners to engage with the Council to progress an option. 	
	TCRC Group scores for Option 4	
	Criteria	TCRC scores
	Quickly negate the health and safety risk to owners	4/5
	No financial loss to owners	2/5
	Enable Masterplanning and demolition of redundant stock	4/5
	Mitigate the financial loss to the Council, Domestic Rate Payers and to the Housing Revenue Account	5/5
	Deliverability	8/10
	Total	23/30

	<p>The TCRC Group provided the following justification for their scoring of this option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial loss to owners is high due to no information being included in relation to home loss and disturbance payments, which they would be entitled to receive under CPO regulations. The mitigation to the council of financial loss is scored high due to minimal cash having to be expended to effect this option, over and above what it would normally spend when a vacant house is being prepared for reletting. The more owners opting for this option, the less the financial loss to the council, Domestic Rate Payers and to the HRA, which will benefit from reduced servicing costs in relation to houses in minority ownership blocks, which are disproportionately more expensive to manage. Deliverability is simple, hence the high scoring on this criteria.
Expected Benefits/Disbenefits that informed the scoring.	<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially a quick solution This option negates the health and safety risk to owners more quickly Affected residents retain being homeowners by exchanging their properties, where required, for equivalent council-owned homes, which would be made 'RAAC free'. Potential to downsize Opportunity to bring housing stock, not meeting HRA requirements into economic use quickly. <p>Disbenefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity in allocations process Equity in equal value People and families leaving the local community Only available for Council owned flatted properties
Risks Specific to this Option	The allocations of properties requires further exploration with the community. They have suggested that all interested parties bid for properties and names are randomly selected.
Viability	The assessment has indicated that the viability of this option is worth pursuing further, as it may have benefits for owners and benefits for the council in terms of wider housing stock and prompt programme delivery.

Option 5 — Adopt a full roof replacement scheme where homeowners opt for remedial works with additional optional external and environmental upgrades funded through low or no interest loans/grants (UK RAAC option)	
Description	This proposal would see all home owners being able to stay in their home and in a RAAC free property. Following engagement with UK RAAC Group regarding decisions already having been taken on Council properties, the proposal was split in two. Both proposals are outlined below.

	<p>First proposal</p> <p>The Council would procure and co-ordinate replacement roofs on all terraces with owners in favour of this option, and utilise and return Council owned properties to use. The Council would effect removal of all RAAC panels from each dwelling and replace these with a prefabricated, insulated cassette roof.</p> <p>Cavity wall insulation and external rendering would be undertaken on the properties to improve energy efficiency with these costs being fully met by the owner through either a loan agreement or through a group purchase discount formalised by the Council.</p> <p>It was also requested that the Voluntary Acquisition process remain in place for those in favour of that option.</p> <p>This option has been discounted as it does not take account of decisions already taken by Council with regard to Council owned properties. The bringing of properties owned by ACC/HRA back into use as Council housing is out of scope for this Viability Assessment. Similarly, opportunities are available to home owners for environmental retrofit that are not available to the Council, leading to this areas also being considered out of scope for this viability assessment.</p> <p>The Voluntary Acquisition process remains in place.</p> <p>Second proposal</p> <p>Alternatively, the Council could prioritise repairs in blocks where homeowners form a majority or large majority. These properties could either remain council homes or be used in a home swap scheme for homeowners who would prefer remedial works. This approach would be far less disruptive than selecting buildings on the periphery and would enable more homeowners to retain their original homes.</p> <p>This option is very similar to Option 3 and it is thought that exploring the options separately could create some confusion around the different options for owners. As a result, the request for the volume of home ownership to be taken into account when determining which terraces benefit from replacement roofs has been built into Option 3. As a result, the Viability assessment of Option 3 should be read as the second proposal from the UK RAAC Group.</p>
Expected Costs	n/a
Scoring of option	n/a
Expected Benefits/Disbenefits that	As Option 3

informed the scoring.	
Risks Specific to this Option	As option 3
Viability	Only in context of option 3.

6.4 Are the options viable and what is the recommendation?

Are the Options Viable?

Option 1 (Do nothing). This is not deemed to be a viable option and is not recommended to Council.

Option 2 (Voluntary Acquisition at Market value). This remains a viable option for the time being.

Option 3 - Exchange for another property in Balnagask - roof off, roof on – this is a complex, risky but viable option.

Option 4 - Swap (Ex-cambion) for another property of equal value – this is a viable option.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Council consider Options 2, 3 and 4 as viable options.



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Proposal for Aberdeen City Council: Support for RAAC-Affected Homeowners – By Wilson Chowdhry Chairman

Background and Context

During recent discussions with Clackmannanshire Council, a model for addressing Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) housing issues was established. Negotiations resulted in a full roof replacement proposal, reducing costs from £39,000 to £20,000 per homeowner. Additionally, residents there agreed to contribute £9,000 to incorporate external rendering and cavity wall insulation, effectively modernizing their homes. The council is also seeking Scottish Government funding to alleviate financial burdens further.

Given the worsening condition of RAAC-affected properties in Aberdeen, we propose a similar approach to ensure a sustainable, cost-effective, and fair resolution.

We understand that some homeowners are already engaging with the current Voluntary Acquisition (VA) process, with four having confirmed their intent to proceed under the existing terms. One participant has requested a review of the Valuation Office Agency's offer, as the estimated cost of roof replacement he provided is less than half of the deduction applied to his property by the district valuer.

Those proceeding with the VA process have expressed that it remains their preferred option, and we respect their choice. However, we urge the council to consider offering proposed loans or grants for remedial works alongside the Voluntary Acquisition process. This approach would prioritize homeowners' needs over the long-term development potential of a site that may take decades to redevelop—by which time more owners may be willing to sell under a future VA scheme or to a developer.

RAAC Survey Findings

A recent RAAC survey conducted among affected homeowners in Aberdeen highlights the severity of the crisis:

- **45%** of respondents are **aged 65+**
- **35%** have a **disability or long-term health condition**
- **10%** are households with a **child under 18**
- **100%** of respondents stated they **want their roof fixed or**, if forced to move, to receive the **pre-RAAC value of their property**
- **100%** were **dissatisfied** with the value offered for their property under current assessments

These figures demonstrate the urgent need for a resolution that prioritizes fairness and prevents vulnerable residents from financial hardship.

Proposal Overview

We urge Aberdeen City Council (ACC) to consider the following key measures:

1. Adopt a Full Roof Replacement Scheme

- Similar to Clackmannanshire, work with engineers to determine the most cost-effective method of replacing RAAC roofs.
- Engage with contractors to reduce costs through collective bargaining and efficiency measures.
- Explore financing options for homeowners, including council-supported low-interest loans or grants.
- Leave the voluntary acquisition

2. Include External Upgrades

- Offer homeowners the option to contribute additional funds for external rendering and cavity wall insulation (increasing personal sundry debt values).
- Improve the overall energy efficiency of homes, reducing future heating costs and increasing property value.

3. Continue to Seek Scottish Government Funding

- Apply for national funding schemes to assist affected homeowners and ease financial burdens for any agreed sundry debt or provide a grant.
- Ensure all available financial support mechanisms under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 are utilized.

4. Ensure Compliance with Legislative and Policy Frameworks

- **Local Government in Scotland Act 2003:** The Act mandates councils to pursue "best value," which must include socioeconomic considerations rather than just financial cost.
- **Fairer Scotland Duty (Equality Act 2010):** ACC must actively reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage.
- **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015:** Section 10 requires public participation in decision-making, yet ACC has withheld information about voluntary agreements, skewing consultation outcomes.
- **Housing (Scotland) Act 2006:** Section 71 allows councils to provide financial assistance to homeowners for essential repairs and improvements.

5. Challenge the Current "Best Value" Approach

- ACC's decision to offer market valuations under the "best value solution" framework requires scrutiny.
- "Best value" must consider community wellbeing, fairness, and the prevention of homelessness.
- The current approach risks creating a local housing crisis, as many affected homeowners are elderly and unable to secure new mortgages or alternative accommodation.

6. Prevent Unjustified Demolition and Protect Homeowners

- Evidence suggests some councils may be using RAAC as a pretext for demolishing undesirable buildings.
- Clackmannanshire Council's engineer recommended minor repairs and a crash deck, contradicting demolition plans.
- ACC's proposal to demolish and rebuild is impractical without a fully funded redevelopment plan, as evidenced by the 2010 West Lothian Council case where a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was rejected due to a lack of an approved redevelopment scheme.
- **Thus far, Aberdeen City Council has only conducted a desktop review to estimate roof replacement costs. However, councils across Scotland have found that quotes from qualified contractors**

significantly reduce projected expenses. This demonstrates that remedial works are often the most practical and cost-effective solution.

Conclusion

By adopting this proposal, Aberdeen City Council can provide a viable, fair, and legally compliant resolution to the RAAC crisis. Supporting affected homeowners through targeted financial aid, inclusive decision-making, and transparent governance will align with Scottish Government priorities and safeguard community wellbeing. We look forward to discussing this proposal further and working collaboratively to find the best solution for all stakeholders.

Clarifications by e-mail:

From officers to UK RAAC Campaign Group: If reading your proposal correctly, you ask that owners retain their own homes and be given low cost (or no cost) loans/grants to remove RAAC, and that the Council commission and coordinate roof replacements to realise efficiencies for owners. You recognise in your approach that this will lead to a more challenging development footprint.

You also ask that the opportunity be taken to improve energy efficiency and external rendering at the expense of owners as part of these works. Lastly, you ask that the Voluntary Acquisition process be kept open to those who are keen to sell their property.

In terms of the suggestions which are being taken forward with the Torry RAAC Campaign Group Management Committee, you ask that cavity wall insulation and external render treatment be added in order to take the properties closer to modern standards.

From UK RAAC Campaign Group: We understood that replacing roofs in isolation might pose challenges, but we submitted the application to gauge whether the Council would consider repairing the roofs of vacant council properties within blocks where homeowners opted for remedial works. Since some prompting appears necessary, our group believes the scheme could work as follows:

- The Council could repair council-owned homes in all blocks where homeowners agree to roof replacements.
- Alternatively, the Council could prioritize repairs in blocks where homeowners form a majority or large majority. These properties could either remain council homes or be used in a home swap scheme for homeowners who would prefer remedial works. This approach would be far less disruptive than selecting buildings on the periphery and would enable more homeowners to retain their original homes.

Regarding funding for cavity wall insulation and external render, we would prefer a loan agreement. However, if Aberdeen City Council determines this is financially unfeasible, we would like the option for homeowners to access a group purchase discount, formalized through the Council.

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