

APPENDIX B

Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) – Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) Self-Assessment of Compliance 2024/25

Regulatory Requirements		
Assurance and Notification	Evidence	Next steps
Prepare an AAS in accordance with SHR published guidance, submit it to the SHR between April and the end of October each year, and make it available to tenants and other service users.	<p>The Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) has been drafted and informed by our engagement with tenants.</p> <p>The AAS will be made available to tenants online following approval by Committee. All tenants will be signposted to an electronic copy of the statement through Newsbite, our tenant magazine, alongside details of how to request a hard copy.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	Maintain current arrangements.
Notify the SHR of any material changes to the assurance in the AAS during the year.	<p>Over the year the Council has notified the regulator of material changes to the AAS. These have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council advised SHR of the identification of RAAC in our properties and has ensured that the SHR is aware of, and comfortable, with our <u>rehousing programme</u> and other potential impacts. We have also provided them with regular updates. <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	Maintain current arrangements.
Have assurance and evidence that all legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety are being met.	<p>The Council's system of governance provides assurance on our compliance with legal and statutory obligations at management level. It also ensures that Elected Members have effective oversight through Committee structures, and many participate in officer/Member working groups. Council Committee papers are all available through our Council website.</p> <p>A programme of internal audits, which are risk-based, identify any control failures including legal compliance in various areas such as rent management, void properties, and complaints management. In addition, the Council reports quarterly to the Scottish Government on homelessness presentations and outcomes for scrutiny.</p>	Take steps to comply with the duty to offer suitable temporary or emergency accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.

	<p>We've recently had a Quality Improvement Framework approved by Committee. This will provide further assurance, using evidence based approaches to support our annual response.</p> <p>The Council has a corporate system for reporting health and safety incidents and reports appropriately to agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive as required.</p> <p>The Council has a mechanism for reporting on hate crimes.</p> <p>The Council's Health and Safety Team undertake Fire Risk Assessments in our sheltered housing complexes annually and in mainstream multi-storey buildings every three years.</p> <p>The Council Health and Safety Team also undertake routine compliance checks of housing related services as part of its corporate programme.</p> <p>Through established governance arrangements, Elected Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinise service delivery at the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee. • Consider the outcome of Internal and External Audit reports on Housing and homelessness at the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Committee. • Participate in Member/Officer working groups around housing. <p>The Corporate/Extended Corporate Management team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair a Housing Board to oversee improvements in Housing Services. • Chair a Performance Board to oversee progress against agreed Improvement Charters and oversee any recommended improvement actions from external inspection. • Signs off the Annual Governance Statement, including any significant issues (control failures) which have occurred over the year. • Corporate Management Team also receives notifications of health and safety contraventions, and resulting improvement plans, which would include health and safety issues affecting housing and homelessness services. <p>At Management level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Registers are regularly reviewed and updated. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Risk Control team undertakes site visits to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements including compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. • A contract log is in place which identifies responsibilities for different elements of compliance along with contract manager and contractor details. Whether delivered in house or externally, compliance is checked through scheduled compliance meetings. 'Gas-Safe' systems are used for gas compliance and MODUS for asbestos management. • Strategies, policies and procedures are reviewed in keeping with national/locally agreed timescales and expectations. These include the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy and Allocations Policy. <p>RAAC - An Options Appraisal was presented to Council in August 2024 for consideration by Elected Members and the rehoming programme is well advanced with only 8 tenants remaining to be rehoused. Updates are provided through the Communities, Housing, and Public Protection Committee.</p> <p>The Housing Board monitors the delivery of housing related commissioning intentions and oversees performance against agreed service standards and KPIs. The Board will lead on the delivery of the Council's response to emerging issues e.g. response to the Housing Emergency and managing the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete. (RAAC)</p> <p>Non-compliance identified: The increase in homeless presentations during 2024/25 has again resulted in the Council using hotels to supplement its temporary accommodation provision. In summary, the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 states that local authorities may provide as unsuitable accommodation (as defined by Article 5 of the Order), such hotels, to people experiencing homelessness – but for no longer than 7 days. Aberdeen City Council breached that Order on 427 occasions during 2024/25 which is down a fifth on the previous year and the first quarter of the 2025/26 period has seen 67 breaches. New procedures have been put in place around the management of our hotel places alongside the establishment of the</p>	
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	<p>reducing hotel use action plan and weekly monitoring meetings.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we partially comply.</i></p>	
<p>Notify the SHR of any tenant and resident safety matters which have been reported to or are being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive, or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities, or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.</p>	<p>No health and safety matters have been reported to the Health and Safety Executive in the last 12 months.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	<p>Maintain current arrangements.</p>
<p>The Engagement Plan must be made easily available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online.</p>	<p>The 2025/26 Engagement Plan was made available to tenants and is on the SHR website. The Council's Engagement Plan from the Scottish Housing Regulator is published on the Council's website.</p> <p>A hard copy newsletter provided to tenants includes information on how to access the Plan. The Autumn / Winter 2025 edition of Newsbite, our tenant newsletter, will notify tenants how to access the 2025/26 Engagement Plan.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	<p>Maintain current arrangements</p>
Scottish Housing Charter Performance	Evidence	Next steps
<p>Submit an Annual Return on the Charter to the SHR each year in accordance with the published guidance.</p>	<p>The Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) has been completed and returned to the SHR each year since this requirement was introduced in 2013/14. The last ARC return was submitted on 30 May 2025.</p>	<p>Maintain current arrangements.</p>

	This will be published in due course by the SHR on their website along with the data for all social landlords in Scotland.	
<p>Involve tenants, and, where relevant, other service users, in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information. The landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree its approach with tenants ensure that it is effective and meaningful • publicise the approach to tenants • ensure that it can be verified and be able to show that the agreed approach to involving tenants has happened. • involve other service users in an appropriate way • report its performance in achieving or progressing towards the Charter outcomes and standards to its tenants. It must agree the format of performance reporting with tenants, ensuring that it is accessible for tenants and other service users, with plain and jargon- free language. 	<p>A budget of £106,000 remains available for tenant participation and tenants determine how to best utilise the resource to help amplify their voice and participation.</p> <p>The Housing Service Review Group (comprising tenants and residents) participates in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information monthly, on the first Monday of every month except July & December. The Group receives routine reports on our performance against the Charter outcomes and standards, and all reports are published on our website. The Group also participates in developing our annual performance report, this includes reviewing performance trends, benchmarking against our peers and identifying areas for improvement. The Group has access to senior officers who meet with the group on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Housing Service Review Group has completed a review of Tenant & Resident Participation and made recommendations for improvements which are being progressed. Two members of the group presented their report and the Tenant Participation action plan to the Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee for the first time and the action plan is to be reviewed every 6 months.</p> <p>We continue to keep tenant participation under review and officers are developing our Tenant Participation procedures and recording mechanisms, to expand on the work being carried out by Housing and Support Officers. This will include more rigorous reporting from each Tenant and Resident Organisation to ensure there is greater clarity of all actions being progressed in collaboration with tenants. A range of approaches to eliciting tenant voice are used, including tenant surveys, focus groups, and regular partnership working with tenant organisations e.g. NETRALT.</p> <p>Officers continue to seek opportunities to learn from national best practice through attendance at a range of networks and forums e.g. Scottish Rent Forum, Scotland's Housing Network and North and Islands Housing Hub.</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Policy has recently been refreshed to reflect operational delivery and is to be approved by Communities, Housing and Public Protection</p>	Maintain current arrangements and continue to seek opportunities to increase participation and voice.

	<p>Committee on 26 August 2025.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	
Tenant and user redress	Evidence	Next steps
<p>Make information on reporting significant performance failures available to tenants, including SHR <u>leaflet</u>.</p>	<p>The Council have published the Scottish Housing Regulator's 'Significant Performance Failure' leaflet on our website and the reporting form is also available. Information on how to report performance failures is also made available to all tenants through the newsletter and through tenant information packs.</p> <p>Information is available online and can be accessed easily by those who use assistive technology. Accessibility guidelines are also adhered to for hard copy documents, which are available in alternative formats where required.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply and at the same time wish to further amplify tenant voice and participation.</i></p>	<p>Maintain current arrangements.</p>
<p>Provide tenants/other service users with the information they need to complain and seek redress, and respond to tenants within service standard timescales, in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).</p>	<p>The Council follow the Model Complaints Handling Procedure set out by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The Council was a test local authority for the child friendly complaints process and has now fully rolled this out.</p> <p>Information on our Complaints Handling Procedure, including how to make a complaint, is published on our website and a complaints leaflet is available at all offices. A person can make a complaint by using our online form or in person at any council office. Alternatively, they may contact us in writing or by telephone.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	<p>Maintain current arrangements.</p>

Ensure effective arrangements in place to learn from complaints and from other tenant/service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance.	<p>Complaints performance data and tenant feedback on services is used to inform service improvement through lessons learned approaches.</p> <p>Upon closure of every complaint, responding officers systematically identify any learning points. This is particularly important where complaints are upheld, but even a complaint which is not upheld can highlight the need for change. For example, complaints have highlighted where we need to improve communications and change some of our internal procedures.</p> <p>A Complaints Feedback Team is in place and this team implements control processes for the effective resolution and analysis of complaints.</p> <p>Complaints performance data is routinely reported to, and scrutinised by the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	Maintain current arrangements.
Whistleblowing	Evidence	Next steps
Have effective arrangements and a policy for whistleblowing by staff and elected members, which it makes easily available and which we promote.	<p>An updated Whistleblowing Policy was put in place in November 2023. A copy of the policy is available online. The policy applies to all employees and workers including persons contracted to personally provide services to the Council, persons undergoing training or work experience as part of a training course, elected members, and agency workers.</p> <p>The Whistleblowing policy is included in staff induction and policy refresh activity.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	Maintain current arrangements.
Equalities and Human Rights	Evidence	Next steps
Have assurance and evidence that it considers equality and human rights issues properly	Aberdeen City Council has agreed an Equalities Outcome Mainstreaming Plan to promote and embed equality in our services from 2021 to 2025. Our Equality Outcomes as a service provider are to ensure:	Maintain current arrangements.

<p>when making all of its decisions, in the design and review of internal and external policies, and in its day-to-day service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EO 1 - All people with protected characteristics will access information, goods and services knowing that social and physical barriers are identified and removed, with a focus on Age, Gender reassignment and Disability. • EO 2- Diverse communities in Aberdeen will have an increased sense of safety and belonging within their neighbourhood and City, with a focus on Race (including Gypsy/Travellers), Religion and Sexual Orientation. • EO 3 – Representation in civic participation of people with protected characteristics will be improved by ensuring our leaders, staff and organisation champion the equality agenda in the city, with a focus on Disability, Race and Sex. <p>In April 2024, the Council agreed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which replaced the existing Diversity and Equality Policy. Tenants and Residents helped to shape the policy.</p> <p>The Council uses Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) to understand the impact of any proposed changes on equality, human rights, children’s rights and socio-economic disadvantage. The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process guides officers to systematically consider relevant evidence to determine if there may be an unfair or unequal effect on different groups of people within the community or the workforce because of a policy or proposal. It then guides officers to consider the actions required to mitigate any disadvantage identified. As part of our continuous review and improvement, the IIA also guides consideration against the Consumer Duty and environmental impacts. Examples from this year include Viability Assessment of Proposals from Owners of Properties with RAAC report to Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee on 27 May 2025 and Resettlement Delivery Plan report to Communities Housing & Public Protection on 11 March 2025.</p> <p>Documents, information, and written communications are available in alternative formats and translation panels included. Interpreter services are arranged for face-to-face contact where required.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we fully comply.</i></p>	
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<p>To comply with these duties, landlords must collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for their existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists, governing body members and staff. Local authorities must also collect data on protected characteristics for people who apply to them as homeless. Landlords who provide Gypsy/Traveller sites must collect data on protected characteristics for these service users.</p>	<p>The Council's approach to collecting and recording data on protected characteristics varies across services. Work is ongoing with the equalities team to develop an approach that enables standard data capture that can be applied within the Housing Service (for existing and new tenants, people experiencing homelessness and people who use the Gypsy/Traveller site) enabling greater consistency.</p> <p>Data on housing staff is collected corporately and meets requirements. Data Privacy Statements are used appropriately. Aberdeen City Council's data controller registration number is Z5018566.</p> <p>Information sharing protocols are in place for sharing sensitive personal data (e.g. MAPPA, Serious Offenders Liaison Officer (SOLO)).</p> <p>Personal mandates are required for sharing of personal data where information sharing protocols are not in place.</p> <p>The Council is appropriately registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.</p> <p><i>Our assessment is that we partially comply.</i></p>	<p>Maintain current arrangements</p>
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Self-evaluation against the Scottish Housing Charter

Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, section 31 states that: 'Ministers must set out standards and outcomes which social landlords should aim to achieve when performing housing activities. The document in which those standards and outcomes are set out is to be known as the "Scottish Social Housing Charter".' As a result, the service has reviewed each standard to identify next steps to secure continuous improvement and also shown how this assessment has informed the development of our Local Housing Strategy Outcomes.

Charter Outcome	Next steps in securing continuous improvement
<p>THE CUSTOMER/LANDLORD RELATIONSHIP</p> <p>Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: they support the right to adequate housing every tenant and other customer has their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.</p>	<p>There were 1,051 adaptations completed on properties in 2024/25, a slight increase on the 946 in the previous year. We will continue to work in collaboration with Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure that appropriate adaptations are in place.</p> <p>459 affordable homes were completed during 2024/25 with a further 391 projected to be completed during 2025/26.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Investment Plan has a target that a minimum of 15% of all new affordable homes should be fully wheelchair accessible.</p> <p>Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support a sufficient supply of housing to meet the varying needs of the people of Aberdeen. • We will use a multi-agency approach, technology and other innovations to enable the people of Aberdeen to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible, in their community.
<p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.</p>	<p>We will continue to consider the need to provide information in alternative formats to ensure accessibility.</p>

<p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers are offered a range of opportunities that make it easy for them to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.</p>	<p>Following the disappointing survey return on the Tenant Satisfaction Survey in 2023, an alternative approach to eliciting the voices of our tenants has been developed. Work is underway to commission an independent external partner to undertake 1,300 interviews (face to face and telephone). This will provide a dataset we can have a high level of confidence in, and we will be able to drill down at housing management levels and consider specific tenant attributes (such as age, sex, ethnicity, house type and area). This survey is anticipated to be undertaken in August/September 2025 with detailed analysis, thereafter, and the results of which will inform improvement priorities for the Housing Cluster and support further submissions of the ARC.</p> <p>We also undertake surveys for those tenants who have moved into their new homes, and we will continue with the existing process to seek their feedback on the level of satisfaction with their overall experience. The level of satisfaction recorded for April-August 2024 was 84.2%. We are aware that there was a period of time that these surveys were not being issued due to a change in the system. We took the opportunity to revisit the questions asked as part of the survey and have now updated this.</p> <p>We will continue to invest resources (finance and personnel) in this important area.</p>
<p>HOUSING QUALITY AND MAINTENANCE</p> <p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes, as a minimum, when they are allocated are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), and any other building quality standard in place throughout the tenancy; and also meet the relevant Energy Efficiency and Zero Emission Heat Standard</p>	<p>Performance on the number of properties meeting EESSH compliance was maintained over 2024/25 at 94.5%.</p> <p>SHQS compliance decreased slightly from 90.43% in 2023/24 to 88.63% in 2024/25. However, our projection to the end of the next reporting year is 91.80%. Again, this sits above the Scottish Local Authority average for SHQS (77.95%). We will continue to increase the number of completed EICR and properties meeting SHQS.</p> <p>We will develop and publish an Asset Management Model to help us devise and implement a sustainable means of meeting all building quality standards.</p> <p>We will build on the work we have done to streamline accountability for voids and work to reduce them. This will include consideration of the unintended consequences of the Minimum Letting Standard and the introduction of the repairs module for the NEC system.</p>

	<p>Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will improve the condition of existing homes across all tenures and improve their energy efficiency to help to alleviate fuel poverty and address climate change and support a just transition to net zero. • We are committed to reducing health inequalities by providing affordable, accessible, high quality and energy efficient homes that enhance people's health and wellbeing.
<p>NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY</p> <p>Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.</p>	<p>Repairs performance continues to be above the national average. Over 2024/25 emergency repairs were carried out within 3.78hrs, (Local Authority average is 4.29hrs), non-emergency repairs within 7.44 days (Local Authority average 10.03 days) and reactive repairs completed right first time 91.53% (Local Authority average 89.76%).</p> <p>Despite this positive data, repairs satisfaction levels have reduced from our last tenant satisfaction survey in 2023 from 70.06% to 45.66%. No tenant satisfaction survey has been completed in 2024/25, but a new survey is currently being developed which is to be undertaken in August/September 2025. The local authority average for this indicator is 86.75%.</p> <p>We can advise that the internal satisfaction surveys carried out by the Customer Feedback team are returning a figure of 80% satisfaction with repairs carried out within the 2024/25 year. The commissioning of a digital system, linked with the current housing system is now complete and work is ongoing to build and implement this system. This will give the ability to issue notifications to tenants, will help improve communication with tenants on when repairs will be completed. It is thought that this will help address and improve levels of satisfaction.</p>
Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably	The percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported in the last year which were resolved saw a slight decrease from 99.88% to 98.49%. This sits above the national

<p>possible that: tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.</p>	<p>average of 92.44%. We will continue to work with the Community Safety Partnership to address anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>We will work with colleagues in Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure our response to those who have been the victims of domestic violence are well supported and continue to implement our Domestic Abuse Policy.</p> <p>Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will use a place-based approach to encourage lesser heard voices to shape their communities and the community offering, focusing on the unique circumstances of a particular place and involving local people in decision making.
<p>ACCESS TO HOUSING AND SUPPORT</p> <p>Social landlords work together to ensure that: people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options. Social landlords have a role to prevent homelessness and should ensure that: people at risk of losing their homes get advice and information on preventing homelessness.</p>	<p>In working with partners, we have seen an increase in the number of households referred to RSL's for housing from 16.14% in 2023/24 to 17.16% in 2024/25.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the Royal Foundation's Homewards programme to help prevent homelessness and improve services for the homeless.</p> <p>We will continue to invest in the Financial Inclusion Service and ensure tenants benefit from easy access to support.</p> <p>Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support a proactive housing options approach and will work collaboratively to provide a person-centred service to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.
<p>Social landlords ensure that: people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they</p>	<p>The Housing Board has been established since April 2024 to oversee progress in housing outcomes. The Housing Board brings together all Council Clusters who contribute to the provision of housing services. The first year of operation has seen a clear focus on establishing shared data systems, developing and ensuring full</p>

<p>need on how the landlord allocates homes and on their prospects of being housed.</p>	<p>alignment across plans and strategies, and increasing internal scrutiny of the impact of policy decisions.</p> <p>This cross council way of working has resulted in officers now having a far better understanding of the root cause of some of the issues presenting and some positive green shoots in the data are emerging including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in housing voids from 2,270 in July 2024 to 1,852 at the end of March 2025 • The temporary pause of 'buy backs' helping realise a reduction in the number of buy backs sitting as void for long periods due to the need for expensive health and safety mitigations to comply with social housing standards (from 230 to 135 over the last 6 months) • The relet rate has increased by 19.5% over the last year, with refusals lowered by 11.4% since July 2024. • Abandonments have reduced by 18% over 2024/25. • In 2024/25 over 2,500 properties were re-let (11% of stock) at a cost in the region of £15 million. <p>As a result of our adoption and evaluation on CBL, data shows a decline in overall refusal rates compared with 2023/24 (56.10% in 2023/24 to 52.2% in 2024/25).</p> <p>Despite some early gains, the Housing Board acknowledge the need for an on-going focus on housing voids and have just concluded a detailed exploration of the void path to help better understand the root cause of our position and plan next steps.</p>
<p>Social landlords ensure that: tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations</p>	<p>Tenancy sustainment rates for 2024/25 were 90.65%, a slight improvement from the 89.33%, reported in 2023/24.</p> <p>We will continue to evaluate the impact of our Housing and Support Model to identify next steps.</p> <p>We will continue to keep the criteria for our Rent Assistance Fund under regular review.</p>

<p>Councils perform their duties on homelessness so that: people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness get prompt and easy access to help, advice and information; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to</p>	<p>The total number of lets in 2024/25 was 2,536, an increase from the 2023/24 figure, which was 2,123, and of those, 977 were let to homeless households which is an increase from 797 from the previous year.</p> <p>Tenancy sustainment rates where the applicant was statutory homeless were 86.61% in 2024/25 which is a slight drop from the 86.68% reported in 2023/24.</p> <p>We will continue to support the implementation of the improvement charters aligned to the Homewards programme.</p>
<p>GETTING GOOD VALUE FROM RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES</p> <p>Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that: tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.</p>	<p>Satisfaction from factored owners dropped from 56.90% in 2022/23 to 44.44% in 2023/24. Satisfaction surveys are completed every three years, with the next one being due in 2026/27.</p> <p>We will take decisions on our housing stock following publication of our Asset Management Model.</p>
<p>Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that: a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including details of any individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.</p>	<p>Gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due was sitting at 17.86% when reported to the Regulator in April, a decrease on the previous year (18.25%). Rent arrears have been rising steadily over many years. There is emerging evidence that the rising trend has steadied and is now decreasing. We will continue to implement our improvement project to help address rent arrears and reverse the trend.</p> <p>Rent collected as a percentage of rent due was 100.68%, an increase on 96.57% in 2023/24. The amount of void rent loss for 2024/25 was 8.04%, an increase on the 2023/24 figure of 7.91%.</p> <p>We received Direct Housing Costs (Housing Benefit, Universal Credit) for 15,849 households which equates to 77.7% of the 20,397 tenancies, with a value of £447,502,386.95, an increase on the 14,695 in 2023/24. This is reflective of the need we see in our tenants in light of the cost of living crisis and downturn in the local</p>

	<p>economy. This needs to be considered as we develop our model of Family Support. The provision of financial advice will continue.</p> <p>Universal Credit has increased from 6,890 accounts in 2023/24 to 8,292 for 2024/25.</p> <p>A Rent Assistance Fund was introduced with 2024/25. This new fund helped 499 tenancies with a value of £450,830.50 awarded.</p> <p>Only 38% of tenants who responded to our last tenant satisfaction survey feel that their property represents value for money (this is lower than our comparator social landlords and lower than previous survey responses). There is evidence from the complaints system that tenants feel a two-tier system has developed as a result of new housing developments. There is a need to consider this more fully as we review our Rent Policy.</p>
<p>OTHER CUSTOMERS</p> <p>Local councils and social landlords with responsibility for managing sites for Gypsy/ Travellers should manage the sites so that: sites are well maintained and managed and do not fall below the minimum site standards set in Scottish Government guidance.</p>	<p>The site at Clinterty reopened in February 2024 and has undergone significant improvements, which have enhanced living conditions for the Gypsy/Traveller community. These include enhanced sustainability and improved site layout. A number of third sector and support groups are active at the site resulting in continued satisfaction with the Clinterty Site.</p> <p>We will continue to support the residents at Clinterty.</p>

Additional evidence requested by the Regulator

Requirement	Evidence
Gas Safety	<p>100% compliant with checks carried out within 12 months of the last safety check.</p> <p>We assess that we are fully compliant.</p>
Electrical Safety including EICR	<p>Each property receives a full safety check during any void period.</p> <p>Over the year, there has been a reduction in EICR failures, but we now have a larger number of non-compliant properties due to issues gaining access to properties. A number of failures relate to void properties which will be captured as part of the void process and form part of a wider plan to meet compliance targets over the coming year.</p>

	<p>We have appointed two external contractors to supplement the in-house team to increase capacity to carry out the remaining EICR's.</p> <p>We assess that we are partially compliant.</p>
Water Safety	<p>Appropriate arrangements are in place with regards to water safety, Monthly temperature testing and quarterly cleaning is carried out at all our Very Sheltered and Sheltered buildings. The testing is carried out by a dedicated in-house team.</p> <p>We assess that we are fully compliant.</p>
Asbestos	<p>A centralised database (Modus) is used to record all areas within a property that contains asbestos. This is a live database which is accessible by all staff who carry out work within the properties.</p> <p>We assess that we are fully compliant.</p>
Damp & Mould	<p>Inspectors have undergone training and a specific Schedule of Rates code for damp and mould work has been developed to enable data reporting and monitoring.</p> <p>A webinar was delivered to Housing & Support Officers for awareness raising of how to report instances of damp and mould.</p> <p>We assess that we are fully compliant.</p>
Lift Safety	<p>All lifts receive a monthly safety check and quarterly service.</p> <p>We assess that we are fully compliant.</p>