

Landlord Report

2014-15




**Irvine
Housing**
in Association with you

Introduction

Every April we are required to collect and provide The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) with key information on our performance in achieving the outcomes and standards in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

The SHR use our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to report publicly on our progress in achieving the Charter outcomes and standards.

In August the SHR publish a report for every landlord with key information from its ARC. This landlord report is based on the information published by the SHR and additional statistics requested by our scrutiny panel.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter has a total of 16 outcomes and standards that social landlords should aim to achieve.

The customer/ landlord relationship

- 1. Equalities
- 2. Communication
- 3. Participation

Housing quality and maintenance

- 4. Quality of Housing
- 5. Repairs, maintenance and improvements

Neighbourhood and Community

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

Access to Housing and Support

- 7,8 and 9. Housing options
- 10. Access to social housing
- 11. Tenancy Sustainment
- 12. Homeless People (only applies to Councils)
- 13. Value for Money
- 14 and 15. Rents and Service Charges

Other Customers

- 16. Gypsies/Travellers (only applies to Councils)



We are committed to developing meaningful scrutiny of our services and embedding it within IHA and are fortunate to have a hard-working group of tenants willing to commit their time and energy to work with us to improve service delivery and performance.

Our scrutiny group has completed the Scottish Government approved Stepping Up To Scrutiny training programme and some members have gone on to complete the Chartered Institute of Housing Level 3 in Scrutiny.

The Group has been helping us to review and improve various service areas to ensure we achieve the outcomes and standards set out in the Charter. This has included visiting empty properties and reviewing reasons for tenancy terminations, carrying out a telephone survey of tenants who had required a higher than average number of repairs and reviewing the information on our website. The Group has made various recommendations that have gone to our Board for consideration.

The information in this report was requested by the Group to expand on the landlord report published by the Scottish Housing Regulator in August.

Homes & rents



Our average weekly rents 2014/15

Size of home	Number owned	IHA highest	IHA lowest	IHA average	Scottish average	Difference
Bedsit	11	£65.23	£63.04	£64.01	£64.03	0%
1 bedroom	432	£83.34	£65.96	£67.88	£68.54	-1%
2 bedroom	1,014	£97.85	£65.34	£75.77	£69.60	+8.9%
3 bedroom	526	£111.38	£73.28	£78.58	£75.69	+3.8%
4 bedroom	221	£115.36	£83.34	£80.07	£84.04	-4.7%

Our scrutiny group requested our highest and lowest rents for each size of property. Rents are set dependent on the age and location of the property and local area.

At 31 March 2015 we owned 2,204 homes. The total rent due to us for the year was £8,458,435. We increased our weekly rent on average by 3.00% from the previous year.

We continue to develop new homes, creating new communities for our customers, and maintaining our rents below the Scottish mainstream average.

As part of The Riverside Group we have the capacity to maintain a vibrant new build programme. In the last two years we have transformed the Pennyburn estate, Kilwinning with a demolition and regeneration project, creating 22 new homes in the heart of the community.

Our development in Lamlash on the Isle of Arran has alleviated the housing shortage on the island with 56 highly sought after homes, establishing a new community on the island. We commissioned a report which identified particular and specific housing needs on Arran. In response we developed a rural lettings initiative to allocate these homes.



Tenant satisfaction



Overall Service

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Scottish Social Housing Charter have placed an obligation on landlords to survey their tenants and service users at least once every 3 years and submit the results to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) in their Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) from May 2014.

We survey all our customers annually using the Housemark Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) which obtains satisfaction results suitable for submission to the SHR. There are core questions and questions in relation to the charter which all landlords must ask.

In 2014/15 approximately 480 (just over 20%) of our customers responded to the STAR survey. Surveys were carried out by post, telephone or face-to-face

Keeping them informed

We keep our tenants informed through events, conferences, social media and digital newsletters and are looking forward to launching a new website this winter, enabling our customers to self-serve and carry out more housing-related transactions online.

Of the tenants who responded to our most recent tenant satisfaction survey:

85.9% said they were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared to the Scottish average of 88.1%.

81.8% felt that we were good at keeping them informed about our services and outcomes compared to the Scottish average of 89.3%.

77.9% of tenants were satisfied with the opportunities to participate in our decision making, compared to the Scottish average of 79.6%.

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard was introduced by The Scottish Government to measure the physical quality of housing and to establish if properties reach the required standard.

There were five broad areas that our housing should have met by April 2015.

- Must meet the tolerable standard (i.e. the basic legal minimum standard)
- Must be free from serious disrepair
- Must be energy efficient
- Must have modern facilities and services
- Must be healthy, safe and secure

The Association achieved SHQS in 2014, one year ahead of schedule. The 0.5% homes which are reported as not meeting SHQS were abeyances - this can arise when work cannot be done for 'social' reasons relating to tenants' or owner-occupiers' behaviour (for example, where owner occupiers in a mixed ownership block for common elements of SHQS such as roofs, hallways, etc. do not wish to pay for their share or where tenants refuse works or have fitted their own).

Quality & maintenance of homes

We completed 93.8% of reactive repairs right first time compared to the Scottish average of 90.2%.

99.5%
of our homes met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard compared to the Scottish average of 91.0%.

We operate a repairs appointment system and kept 80.4% of appointments compared to the Scottish average of 92.4%.

81.5% of tenants who had repairs or maintenance carried out were satisfied with the service they received, compared to the Scottish average of 89.3%

The average time we took to complete non-emergency repairs was 7.7 days, compared to the Scottish average of 7.9 days.

We took 7.9 hours on average to complete emergency repairs, compared to the Scottish average of 5.9 hours.



Neighbourhoods

Our vision is ‘Transforming lives Revitalising neighbourhoods’ . We transform lives by providing well maintained, good quality affordable housing whilst creating opportunities to increase household income through our programmes of employment, affordable warmth and money advice. We revitalise neighbourhoods by building new homes, creating and maintaining green spaces and bringing people together through our community engagement programmes.

Anti-social behaviour

The Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 states that a person engages in antisocial behaviour if they;

- “act in a manner that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress; or
- pursue a course of conduct that causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress to at least one person not of the same household.”

We recognise that anti-social behaviour can ruin the lives of individuals and whole communities and is a key area of concern for the government and the public. All customers should have the right to enjoy the peace and quiet of their home free from serious disturbance and intimidation.

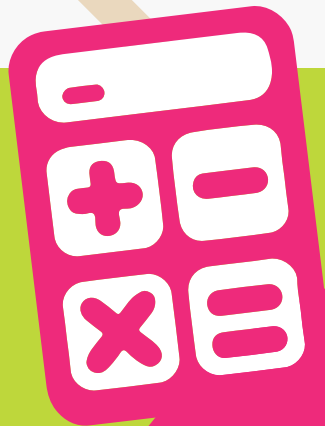
Our anti-social behaviour policy is intended to demonstrate that we will deal firmly and fairly with acts of nuisance, serious anti-social behaviour and crime in the neighbourhoods we manage.



For every 100 of our homes, 5.4 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported in the last year.

90.8% of these cases were resolved within targets agreed locally, compared to the Scottish figure of 83.2%.

Value for Money



The amount of **money we collected** for current and past **rent (£8,471,653)** was equal to **100.2% of the total rent we were due (£8,458,435)**

to collect in the year, compared to the Scottish average of 99.5%.

We **did not collect 0.3%** of rent due because **homes were empty**, compared to the Scottish average of 1.1%.

We took an average of **13.8 days** to **re-let homes**, compared to the Scottish average of 36.8 days.

When trying to spend money wisely, even small things can make a difference. In order to ensure we spend our money wisely we usually focus on three things.

- **How much something costs (economy)**
- **How well we use the money we have (efficiency)**
- **Did we spend the money on the right things and did we get what we expected (effectiveness)**

Our approach to value for money includes minimising the time houses are empty; managing arrears and all resources effectively; controlling costs; getting value out of contracts; and increasing the quality of services with minimum extra cost to tenants, owners and other customers.

Our scrutiny group asked for an explanation of the following:

Rent collected: The total rent collected from all customers including arrears and housing benefit.

Rent due to be collected: The total annual charges in respect of rent and service charges for occupied properties.

Pre payment of rent: Where a tenant makes a payment in advance.

It is possible for landlords to report over 100% collection.

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Equal opportunities

The Association will endeavour to ensure that no person or organisation receives any less favourable treatment than another unless it can be reasonably shown to be justifiable in the circumstances.

The Association is opposed to any improper discrimination and will take appropriate steps within its powers as an employer, service provider and receiver of services to counteract any such improper discrimination.

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