

# In Our House



*Shining a Spotlight on Housing Performance*

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## A Warm Welcome to Dundee City Council's Annual Report on Housing Services for 2016-17.

This report shows the Council's performance against the indicators contained within the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC). All Scottish social landlords (that is local authorities and housing associations) must aim to achieve these charter outcomes for the houses they manage. This report has been prepared together with the Dundee Area Scrutiny Panel.

Providing a good service goes beyond meeting performance targets. This year we are highlighting services provided by our Housing Options Team and meeting needs by building new houses.

We hope that you find this report informative and that it shows how our Council works to meet housing needs in the city.



*Councillor Kevin Cordell, Convenor of Housing*



# Improving Services Through Housing and Communities

**Over the past year the Council has undergone a comprehensive restructure of its services which involved the Housing and Communities Departments coming together under Elaine Zwirlein as Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services. Housing & Communities is responsible for ensuring that tenants are consulted about their housing services and this will now be supported by eight Community Regeneration and Participation Workers and a Performance Liaison Officer.**

The Community Regeneration Participation Workers and the Performance Liaison Officer will liaise with tenants & residents groups and the Dundee Federation of Tenants Associations to ensure better co-ordination across tenant participation and Local Community Planning. This includes service user involvement, consultation on regeneration and meeting the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Communities Officers and Community Regeneration Participation Workers are based in each local community planning partnership area.

The Housing Service is led by Gordon Birrell the Housing Service Manager. Gordon is responsible for service delivery across three teams:

- **Housing Asset Management** - responsible for Reactive and Planned Maintenance, Capital Programme and Regeneration. The team is based at West District Office.
- **Housing Options & Lettings** - responsible for Allocations / Lettings, Common Housing Register, Housing Options and Homelessness, Homefinder and Housing Support. The team is based at East District Office, 169 Pitkerro Road.
- **Tenancy and Estates Management** - responsible for Estates Management, Tenancy Sustainment, Sheltered Housing, Caretaking Service and Gypsy Travellers.

It is great that there are volunteers within Dundee who are willing to give their time to help us to deliver the best housing services that we can. There is also a great need for more tenants to get involved in the decisions that affect them. You can participate as much or as little as you want, so there is no better time to get involved.

*Elaine Zwirlein*  
Executive Director, Neighbourhood Services

**Have Your Say** The Dundee Area Scrutiny Panel (DASP) are a group of elected people made up of tenants, owners and other service users who examine, question and assess the City Councils performance to improve the quality of Housing Services.

If you would like more information on how you can Get Involved & Have Your Say, please contact Mark Cooper, Performance Liaison Officer on Tel: 01382 307330, Email: [HaveYourSay@dundeecity.gov.uk](mailto:HaveYourSay@dundeecity.gov.uk), or by using one of the following:



@TenantParticipationDundee



TenantParticipationDundee @HaveYourSay

# Dundee Area Scrutiny Panel – Casting a Critical Eye

The Council is improving in many areas with the help of our tenants. The Scrutiny Panel are a group of volunteers who use housing services. They agree with us what areas of service they want to look at. The Scrutiny panel don't work alone, they are helped by Tenant Inspectors and Mystery shoppers and the Council would like to thank them and the rest of the Scrutiny Panel for their continued support, dedication and hard work.

In the last year the Scrutiny Panel has:

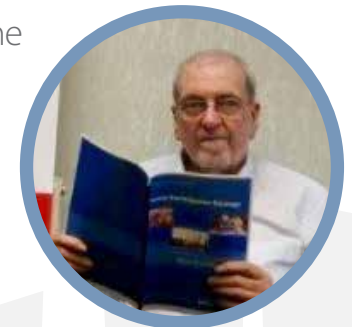
- **Completed a Tenant Led Inspection of Tenant Participation**
- **Received briefings on Housing Allocations**
- **Completed a Tenant Led Inspection of Customer Service Standards**
- **Reviewed new tenants packs**
- **Represented the DASP at the Tenants Information Service annual conference and awards**

During 2018/19 in addition to reviewing its work priorities the Scrutiny Panel hopes to:

- **Oversee a mystery shopping for the Housing Options Service**
- **Oversee a Tenant Led Inspection of communications from the Anti-Social Behaviour Service**
- **Review guidance and forms for housing applications**
- **Review value for money and affordability of housing rents**

"I would like to thank to all the volunteers involved in Scrutiny for making a difference in Dundee. Without their dedication we couldn't scrutinise the council to ensure customers not only get value for money in the services they receive, but are treated honestly and fairly. If you are interested in making a difference, please Get Involved & Have Your Say".

*Jim Cochrane DASP Chair*



# Homelessness and Housing Options

We give a priority to homeless people on housing waiting lists but this is balanced with the needs of others e.g. people with medical needs. Every year approximately 1100 Council Houses become available but the housing list is over 7000. To help with re-housing we have a Common Housing List with some local housing associations and we help people find private rented accommodation through the Homefinder Service which is also based at Pitkerro Road.



The Council is responsible for preventing homelessness and offering temporary accommodation. The Housing Options Team, based at Pitkerro Road is our first line response for tackling homelessness.

## The Team provides:

- Advice to people at risk of becoming homeless
- Assessment of the needs of people who are homeless
- Provision of temporary accommodation

Just finding a house is not always the answer to dealing with homelessness, which is why it is important that we work with specialist providers e.g. Women's Aid or Action for Children, healthcare workers and social workers to meet our clients' needs.

# New Affordable Rented Housing for the City

The Council and its partners continue to make good progress in delivering high quality, energy efficient new build social rented housing for Dundee. Scottish Government plans Investment of £61 million from 2017 to 2021 for affordable housing in the City.

Dundee City Council will develop a number of new council houses, with 33 units on site at Alexander Street and 83 units are to be built on the site of the Derby Street multi storey flats, starting in November 2017. In addition to the building at Alexander Street and Derby Street it is also planned to develop 30 new houses every year in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

In 2016/17 138 social rented houses were completed by our partner housing associations and approximately 400 more are on site or scheduled to start in the next two years.

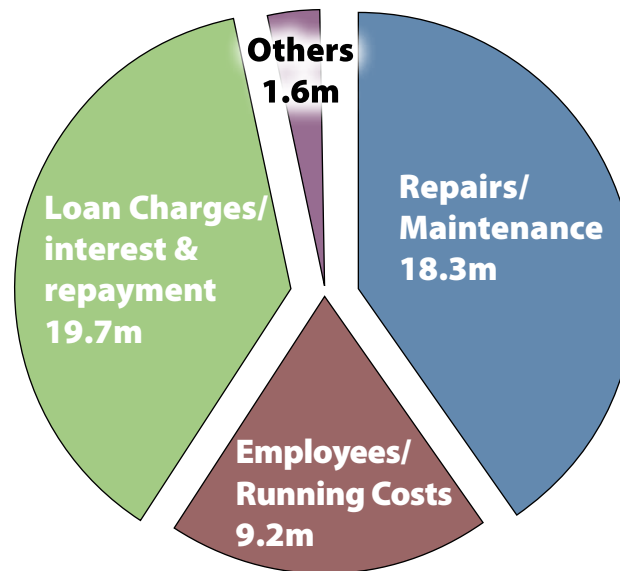
Dundee City Council also adapts existing houses and installs equipment to help people with medical conditions. In 2016/17 Dundee City Council carried out 351 adaptations to our properties costing £768,487. In the private sector 55 applications were completed at a total cost of £201,792.

# Value for Money

Work to improve housing (e.g. rewiring, kitchen and bathroom replacements) and work to keep houses up to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, are funded by loans.

Repayment of these loans and interest is paid from the Housing Revenue account. Day to day repairs to council houses is roughly equal to what we spend on capital improvements. The third largest cost to the HRA is running the housing service which includes office rents, heating, lighting etc,

The money to pay for managing, improving and repairing council housing is funded from Council House rents and service charges. Funding for Council Housing is kept separate from other Council budgets in an account called the Housing Revenue Account (or HRA). Council tax does not pay for council housing.



## Average weekly rents 2015/16

Size of Home	Number of houses	Dundee City Council	Scottish Local Authority Average
1 Apartment	186	£57.73	£58.25
2 Apartment	3684	£63.04	£64.13
3 Apartment	6469	£73.42	£69.44
4 Apartment	1855	£84.15	£74.96
5 Apartment	334	£96.13	£82.40

The total rent due last year was **£49,910,612**

The average weekly rent increase in 2016/17 in Dundee was 1.25%, the Scottish Local Authority average was 2.28%.

The amount of rent arrears owed to the Council was equal to **6.19%** of the total rent due in the year, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 6.02%.

Dundee Council did not collect **1.34%** of rent due because homes were empty, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 0.92%.

**69** tenants were evicted in 2016/17 for not paying rent.

# Performance Report 2016/17

The next few pages describe how we performed against the main indicators for the Scottish Social Housing Charter. For more detail on the Council's performance and comparison with other social landlords, please visit the Scottish Housing Regulators website: [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-andcompare-landlords](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-andcompare-landlords)

## Repairs



**11.56** days

The average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs was **11.56 days**, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 9.18 days.



**14.12** hours

The average time taken to complete emergency repairs was **14.12 hours**, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 5.07 hours.

**73.68%**

of reactive repairs were completed 'right first time', compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 91.11%.

## Medical Adaptations 375

Medical adaptations were completed to assist tenants in their homes.

**37.3** days

was the time taken to complete applications for medical adaptations, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 45.9 days.

## Quality and Maintenance

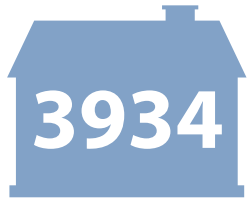
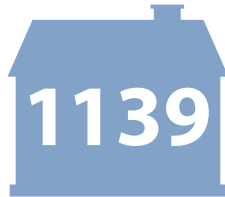
Since 1st April 2015 all social housing should meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). Some owners do not allow permission to complete works such as door entry systems and these properties are given what is called an "abeyance". Excluding these abeyances 100% of council houses meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

**94.2%**

of properties met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 89.14%.

## House Allocations

number of houses let in 2016/17



new applicants were added to the list

the number of applicants on the waiting list at the end of March 2017 was



## Gas Safety

98.8%

of Dundee City Council housing stock had their Gas Safety Record renewed by the anniversary date, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 99.87%.

## Antisocial Behaviour

1758 complaints of anti social behaviour were reported across the city. This includes all Dundee residents, not just tenants.

78.67%

of anti-social complaints were resolved within targets agreed locally, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 87.2%.

## Factoring

The percentage of homeowners satisfied with the factoring services for general maintenance of common areas such as stair cleaning, we provide was

58.6%

compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 65%.

## Complaints

100

complaints were received

89.62% of 1st stage complaints were responded to in full within the timescales set out by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 76.26%.

## Tenancy Sustainment

88.57%

of new tenancies to applicants from the Council's waiting list were sustained for more than one year, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of 89.4%.

# Tenant Satisfaction

The Council surveys a sample of service users every three years to measure satisfaction against some of the most important indicators in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. We have commissioned a new survey for 2018. The survey will be carried out by an expert consultant who is independent of the Council and who has experience of completing such surveys to the standard that the Scottish Housing Regulator expects. The survey of tenants will involve researchers contacting a sample of tenants by letter and then arranging a time to complete a face to face questionnaire. Additionally there will be a postal/on-line survey of the owners of private houses who we provide a factoring service to. We'll report the results of this survey next year. These are the results for the last survey we completed in 2014.

**89.34%**  
said they were satisfied with the overall housing service the Council provided, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **82%**

**86.80%**  
felt that Dundee City Council was good at keeping them informed about its housing services and outcomes, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **81.2%**

**88.64%**  
of new tenants were happy with the standard of their home when moving in, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **84.5%**

**88.32%**  
of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their home, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **80.5%**

**78.43%**  
of tenants were satisfied with the opportunities to participate in Dundee City Council's decision making, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **72.77%**

**87.56%**  
of tenants are satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood they live in, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **80.5%**

**95.33%**  
of tenants who had repairs or maintenance carried out were satisfied with the service they received, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **86.2%**

**86.55%**  
of tenants feel that the rent for their property represents good value for money, compared to the Scottish Local Authority average of **77.6%**