

IN OUR HOUSE



Annual Customer Report on Housing Performance 2013-2014

Looking at performance...

This is some of Dundee's Scrutiny Panel...

Dundee's Scrutiny Panel got going in June 2014. The panel are a group of volunteers who are tenants of the council or other people who use the council's housing services. The Panel are completely independent of the Council and they will look at the Council's performance as a landlord and make recommendations for improving housing services now and in the future. Although still a relatively new group, we can honestly say that we have been able to influence policies and decisions that affect our lives and the services we receive.

The Scrutiny Panel will continue to meet and will agree which parts of the Housing department that they want to investigate and scrutinise next. However we don't want to do this alone and are looking for other people to take part as well. If you want to find out more about how you can influence the Council's housing services, then please fill out and return the form on page 8.



In this issue...

- A word from the Director of Housing
- Repairs Sub Group Report
- Antisocial Sub Group Report
- Lettings Sub Group Report
- More about our performance
- Become a scrutineer

"We all feel that being involved in Scrutiny of the housing Service has been good. Sometimes it was frustrating and we didn't all agree all of the time but we've all learned something from it. In the end we're very happy with our progress and see great things for the future"

- Dundee Tenants Scrutiny Panel

Want to become a scrutineer? See page 8



Introduction

Welcome to the Housing Department's first Annual Customer Report! The Scottish Social Housing Charter challenges all social landlords to meet good standards and shows our performance for all to see. We know in the Council that there is scope for improvement and from experience that we can do it! For example we have seen considerable improvements to our performance in letting houses in recent years and the support we give to homeless and other vulnerable people means that we help these people maintain their houses longer than most other landlords.

The idea of 'Tenant Scrutiny' for performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter is new to landlords in Scotland. In Dundee we have a long history of tenant scrutiny through Tenant Led Inspections, tenant involvement in the Repairs Partnership and the Housing Best Value Review Group and working in partnership with the Dundee Federation of Tenants Associations. This Charter has given us an opportunity to refresh our approach and we have been busy over the last 18 months in setting up a new process for 'Scrutiny' by tenants and other people who use housing services. As a result we now have a 'Scrutiny Panel' made up of 16 tenants and owners of houses where we provide factoring services. It is early days for the Scrutiny Panel and they have an

ambitious plan, but they have hit the ground running and as you will see in this report they have already had a real impact.

We look forward to lots of discussions with the Panel, and whilst we may not agree on everything, we know we can work together because we all want the same thing, to give the best housing service that we can.

This is our first Customer Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter and we are keen to hear how interesting and useful you find it. You can tell us about it by returning the feedback form on page 8 and you will be entered into a draw to win a family pass for Olympia or a family ticket for Dundee Ice Arena.



Elaine Zwirlein



J Alexander

What this report tells you

This report shows Dundee City Council's performance against the main indicators in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. To help you to understand how well we are doing we have shown the information in comparison with the Scottish Average (this includes all Councils and every Housing Association in Scotland). We have also

given what we call a 'peer' average. This is the average of a number of local authorities who are similar to Dundee in that they manage a similar number of houses to us and are mainly urban. If you want to see more detail about Council's and other landlords performance see the website of the Scottish Housing Regulator.

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-and-compare-landlords



We Can Fix It

Performance in the Repairs Service



The Repairs Sub Group



A Repairs Sub Group looked at the performance of the repairs service, this is what they said:

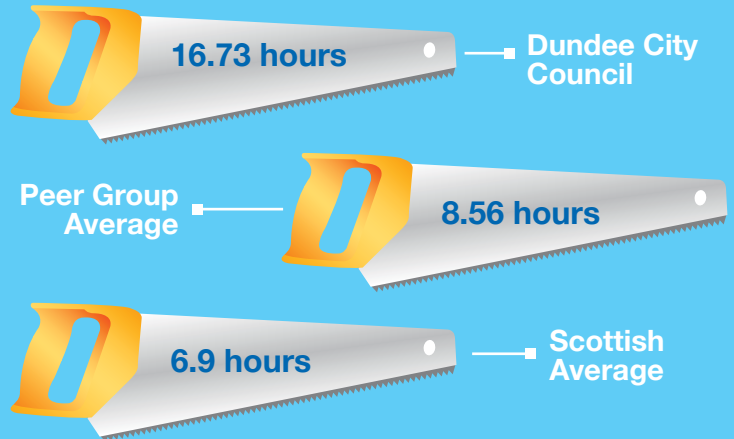
The group thought that there were many strengths to the service including:

- an excellent response to emergencies
- a high level of success in Gas Servicing
- good monitoring of tenant satisfaction via a telephone survey

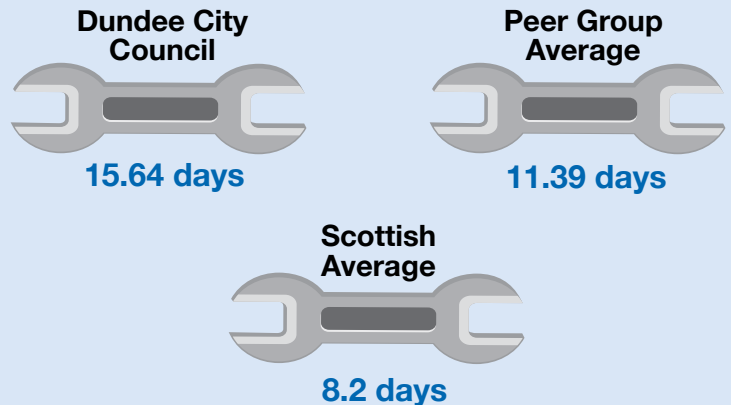
Based on their discussions the group agreed that the following actions should be prioritised:

- Improve the information collected on repairs to help find improvements to the service
- Investigate the introduction of an appointments system for people who need repairs.
- Review the process of learning from complaints and satisfaction surveys.

Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs



Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs



"I have learnt a lot and enjoyed it. It's been quite a lot to get my head around as we've covered so many different areas"

- Margaret Ross, Repairs Sub Group member.



Margaret Ross

"There has been lots of opportunities to use data in a planned way but also lots of opportunities to improve communication. I've since used the repairs service and was given an appointment which helped me massively, as I was trying to coordinate moving in"

- Clark Bremner, Repairs Sub Group member.



Clark Bremner

There was a Tenant Led Inspection on Gas Servicing in 2013. In a tenant led inspection, tenants decide what they want to inspect, they may do visits with workmen or look at how housing staff do their jobs as well as asking customers what they think of the service.

The Council manages repairs through a "Repairs Partnership" where tenants are represented on the Partnership Board. The Partnership is due to be reviewed in 2015 and we will be looking for Tenants to take part in the review.

If you want to get involved in things like this see the contact addresses on the back page.



Giving you a Home

Access to Housing

The Lettings Sub Group

We have worked hard to improve on the time taken to re-let houses in recent years. We have witnessed an improvement in performance from an average of 98 days to re-let a house in 2011 to 63 days in 2013/14. Our average to October 2014 is now less than 50 days so we are well on track to seeing significant improvements to our efficiency.

At the end of the summer six tenants looked in detail at our performance in letting houses.

They thought that the Council was good at:

- building new Council houses to a really high standard
- making it easier to apply for housing with housing associations through a Common Housing Register
- 87% of tenants were satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in

The sub group thought that improvements should focus on:

- Reviewing the days taken for each trade (e.g. electrician, painter & decorator etc) in re-letting a house to speed things up in order to improve on lost rents
- Reviewing the 5 day target for refusal of an offer on housing
- Involving disabled tenants in the design of the adapted houses.

"It was an excellent forum for future use and a fruitful process. We had a full, frank and healthy debate"

- Brian Shaw, East District Housing Manager.

"I thought it was very good, there were some confusing bits. Trying to take it all in and on board was difficult sometimes but it was useful, enjoyable and positive"

- Marion Ali, Lettings Sub Group member.



Average length of time taken to let properties in the last year

63 days

Peer Group Average: 57 days
Scottish Average: 36 days

Percentage satisfied with standard of home when moving in

87%

Peer Group Average: 80%
Scottish Average: 83%



Dundee's Common Housing Register

A Common Housing Register is where you can apply for housing for a number of different landlords by filling in a single application form. In November 2014 Abertay Housing Association joined Hillcrest Housing Association, Caledonia Housing Association and Dundee City Council in a Common Housing Register. The advantages to a Common Housing

Register, apart from saving applicants the time to fill in lots of different application forms is that it gives better access to different housing and allows us to match houses with housing needs better. We hope that in the near future other local housing associations will join to make the service more widely available.



A Better Place to Live

Neighbourhoods and Communities

The Antisocial Behaviour Sub Group

This sub group of tenants and home owners met with Council staff to discuss our approach to Antisocial Behaviour and its impact on their communities. This followed up a Tenant Led inspection of the Antisocial Behaviour Team earlier in the year. This action plan was agreed by Housing Management and our performance on this will be reported next year.

The Panel noted many positives in the service including:

- there is a successful and targeted approach to the use of Antisocial Behaviour Order's (ASBO'S)
- The use of diversionary measures for youths, like the Barry Buddon Youth Project was highlighted as an example of good practice.
- There has been good scrutiny of the service via a Tenant Led Inspection.

Suggestions to improve the service are:

- A 6 month target timescale was agreed to 'resolve' cases. This will be kept under review and will be re-assessed next year. Customer satisfaction surveys should be carried out quicker to ensure feedback is more up to date.
- Promotion and advertising of the service should be improved

One of the first things we discussed was that the Antisocial Behaviour Team didn't deal with drug problems. Stewart from the Antisocial Behaviour team was quick to point out that the team did deal with these issues and immediately arranged a briefing with the team to ensure that they were all clear about this and that this message was promoted correctly.

"I thought it was good that that the Council took our views on board and acted so quickly"

- Yvonne Tosh, Lettings Sub Group member

"I was wary when I first went on the panel but everyone listened, so it was a good experience"

- Martin Anderson, Lettings Sub Group member



Percentage satisfied with management of neighbourhood

80%



Peer Group Average:80%
Scottish Average: 84%

Community Safety Hub

The Community Safety Hub includes council officers from the Anti-social Behaviour and Community Safety Teams together with Police Scotland's local Community Intelligence Unit. Bringing these teams from the Council and the Police under one roof to work together helps us to focus more closely and

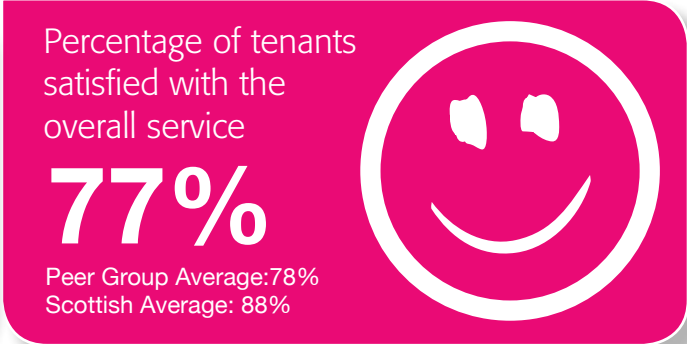
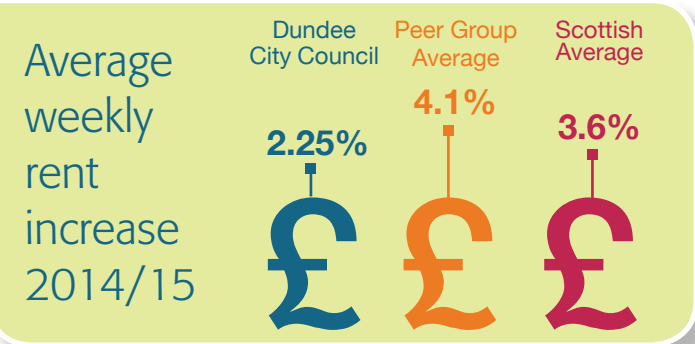
improve even further on our efforts to tackle crime and anti social behaviour in the city. Our approach to joint working across all tenures has resulted in recorded levels of crime and the fear of crime falling in the city in recent years.



Our Performance

The additional information and performance indicators below are the ones which the Scottish Housing Regulator thinks are the most important ones to customers. We have given you information on how we do in Dundee compared with the Scottish Average and "peers" who are comparable with us.

House size and average weekly rent





Our Performance



Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and outcomes.

74%

Peer Group Average: 77%
Scottish Average: 89%

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities to participate in their landlord's decision making processes

52%

Peer Group Average: 61% Scottish Average: 78%

Percentage of stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard



* 85%

* When properties exempted from the standard are discounted, 92% meet the standard.

Peer Group Average: 81% Scottish Average: 85%



Percentage of repairs completed right first time

72%

Peer Group Average: 86%
Scottish Average: 87%

Percentage of rent lost through properties being empty in the last year

2.4%

Peer Group Average: 1.8%
Scottish Average: 1.2%

Rent collected from tenants as a percentage of total rent due in the reporting year

97%

Peer Group Average: 99% Scottish Average: 99%



Percentage of tenants who have had repairs and maintenance carried out in the last 12 months who are satisfied with the service

82%

Peer Group Average: 88% Scottish Average: 88%



Get Involved

Our aim is that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence Council decisions at a level that they feel comfortable with. To ensure participation is maximised we offer a range of ways for you to get involved.

This might include taking part in a Tenant Led Inspection; becoming a Mystery Shopper; joining our Communications Group (who helped to write this report); attending Estate Walkabouts or Focus Groups.

You can also get involved by taking part in surveys either by email, online, text, phone or post.

If you would like to find out more about Tenant Participation, Scrutiny or how you can input your views, please contact the Tenant Participation Team on 01382 307330 or 307331 or by email on dcc.housing@dundeecity.gov.uk.

What did you think of In Our House?

Now that you have read our first annual customer report we would really like to know what you think about it. It would be helpful to us if you could please take a few minutes to complete the form below and return it to us using the freepost address. Alternatively, you can complete the survey online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/inourhouse>.

We appreciate your feedback and if you leave your details we will enter you in our prize draw for a chance to win either a family pass to Olympia or a family ticket for Dundee Ice Arena.



1. Did you find this report useful and informative? Yes No
2. Did you find the report easy enough to understand? Yes No
3. Can you suggest any improvements to the design of this report?
.....
4. Are there any other areas of service that you would like us to report on?
.....
5. Would you like to be involved in helping us to produce our Customer Report in 2015? Yes No
6. Would you like more information about getting involved in Scrutiny? Yes No

If so, please provide your contact details and a member of the Tenant Participation Team will be in touch.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

..... POSTCODE

PHONE: EMAIL:

Please complete this form and return it to Dundee City Council, FREEPOST TY 330, Quality and Performance Unit, Dundee, DD1 9XE by 31st March 2015 using this freepost address to be entered into the prize draw.



...you can do so much more **ONLINE** at...
dundeecity.gov.uk