

In Our House



*Shining a Spotlight on
Housing Performance*

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Chairperson's Welcome

I am pleased to present the Council's second annual report, which compares against the performance information to the previous year's indicators set out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The report also describes how the Dundee Area Scrutiny Panel has consulted.

I would like to thank all members of the Panel for their dedicated and enthusiastic contribution to its work. Many people have collaborated to the success of scrutiny in Dundee, including external organisations and council officers; so my thanks go to all of them.

The Scrutiny Panel continues to have a significant role in developing new policy through their in depth investigations and the recommendations arising from them. The Panel looks forward to the continuing progress of our arrangements, including scrutiny of the complaints procedure this coming year.

Eddie Richardson, Dundee Area Scrutiny Panel



What this report tells you

This is the second annual report on Dundee City Council's performance against the main indicators in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

We have shown in this report how we have done compared with last year. We are happy to say that in most areas we have seen some improvement.

The report also tells you how the Scrutiny Panel, a group of volunteers who use housing services and have been involved in helping us to improve our services over the last year.

If you want to see more detail on the Council's performance against the Charter Indicators and see comparisons with other landlords this is available on the Scottish Housing Regulators website:

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

Get Involved!

We are keen for more tenants to be involved in our groups and Tenants Associations, so if you are interested in joining the Focus Groups or the Tenants Scrutiny Panel, please contact your local Tenant Participation Officer (TPO) for further information.

See back page for details

"I got involved as I wanted to influence how services are delivered by Dundee Council. I have met with senior management and helped implement changes, like Repairs and Lettings working closer to let houses quicker."

'Personal Growth Opportunities'



Sheila Morrison
Scrutiny Panel Member

"The opportunity to train to Chartered Institute of Housing qualification has been invaluable to me. It has given me confidence to ask difficult questions and not to be afraid to ask for more information when required."

'Stepping Up To Scrutiny'



Yvonne Tosh
Scrutiny Panel Member

Tenant Participation

Tenant Participation and engaging with our tenants is very important to Dundee City Council.

This year we are reviewing our Tenant Participation Strategy.

- Over the last couple of years we have been aware that in some aspects of tenant participation we have improvements to make. We have started to review our service with the assistance of our colleagues in other local authorities through the Scottish Housing Network. Through the Tenant Participation strategy we will put in place actions to make sure that we continue to give good value for money to our tenants by allowing good participation in our decisions.
- There will be a launch of a consultation in 2015 which will be attended by residents, tenants and service users of the city. We aim to publish the final strategy in 2016.
- We support an established Scrutiny Panel made up of tenants and residents looking at how well we deliver our services. This process gives them the opportunity to influence effective delivery of these services and make recommendations for improvements.

Tenants Information Service Conference 2015



The Council funded places for tenants including some of the Scrutiny Panel to attend the annual Tenants Information Service (TIS) Conference in June 2015. The main topic of the conference was how tenant scrutiny has been rolled out by different landlords across Scotland. All of the tenants who attended found the event useful and were happy to see that Dundee's approach compared well with others.

Stepping Up To Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Panel has received training from the Chartered Institute of Housing through their Stepping Up To Scrutiny Programme. This training has been developed to help tenants understand how to go about scrutinising housing services. Everyone enjoyed the course and found it very informative. Some of the panel may now go on to receive a formal qualification and they are starting to put what they have learned into practice.



Last year we told you about the Scrutiny Panel's inspections of the Repairs, Letting and Antisocial Behaviour services.

For each service an action plan to improve the service was agreed. In the last year these are some of the changes we have made as a result of the work of the Scrutiny Panel:

Repairs

The repairs subgroup recommended:

- Ongoing Training for front line staff - refresher training for staff
- Keeping customers informed if the repair will not be completed on time - online information is being progressed to keep tenants up to date.
- Operatives should call tenants to advise when they will attend, to reduce amount of missed appointments - all operatives now have mobile phones, sending text messages prior to attendance contributing to a 10% reduction in aborted visits.

Lettings

The lettings subgroup recommended:

- A review of the 5 day target for refusal period - timescales for refusals of an offer of a house have been reduced from 5 to 4 days.
- Create a set of relevant Performance Indicators that the team can review together monthly - a new set of

performance management indicators have been agreed.

- Explore ways to notify housing of completion of relet repairs in advance - there is improved liaison between letting staff and operatives.

Antisocial

The antisocial subgroup recommended:

- Rewording of letters to make them more personal - our computer department is changing the format of standard letters to allow officers to personalise them.
- Publicise the ASB sections work - it was recognised a greater need for publicity on what we do is required.
- Revision of website information - following the review, the information available on the Council's website relating to antisocial behaviour will be updated and maintained.

The STAR Survey

This year, the Housing Services completed a survey of satisfaction for people who have used our services. This survey is called the STAR (Survey of Tenants And Residents), the benefit of using this survey is that is recommended by the Scottish Housing Regulator for all social landlords so that we can compare our performance against each other.

Housing used an independent researcher called Knowledge Partnership to conduct the survey on our behalf, they have lots of experience in delivering surveys for other landlords.

The survey was done face to face with a sample of tenants and residents across the city who represented all family sizes and people living in different types of houses.

The results of the survey were very positive and in many areas, satisfaction of Dundee City Council tenants was better than the Scottish Average. We know we are getting it right when almost 90% of the tenants we spoke to are satisfied with the overall service we provide, an increase of more than 12% on the previous survey and more than two points higher than the Scottish average of local authorities and registered social landlords.

There is a lot of useful feedback contained in the survey which we will be using this to find further improvements to the way that we work and hopefully when we do the survey again in a couple of years time we will get an even better result!



Some members of the Dundee Area Scrutiny Panel

Tenant Satisfaction

Of the tenants who responded to Dundee City Council most recent survey:

 **89.34%**

said they were satisfied with the **overall service** it provided, compared to the Scottish average of 88.1%
Compared to 77% in **2013/14**

 **88.32%**

of tenants are satisfied with the **quality of their home** compared to the Scottish average of 85.8%.
Compared to 78% in **2013/14**

 **86.80%**

felt that Dundee City Council was good at **keeping them informed** about its services and outcomes compared to the Scottish average of 89.3%
Compared to 74% in **2013/14**

 **78.40%**

of tenants were satisfied with the **opportunities to participate** in Dundee City Council's decision making, compared to the Scottish average of 79.6%
Compared to 52% in **2013/14**

 **88.64%**

of new tenants were **happy with the standard** of their home when moving in, compared to the Scottish average of 86%
Compared to 87% in **2013/14**

 **87.56%**

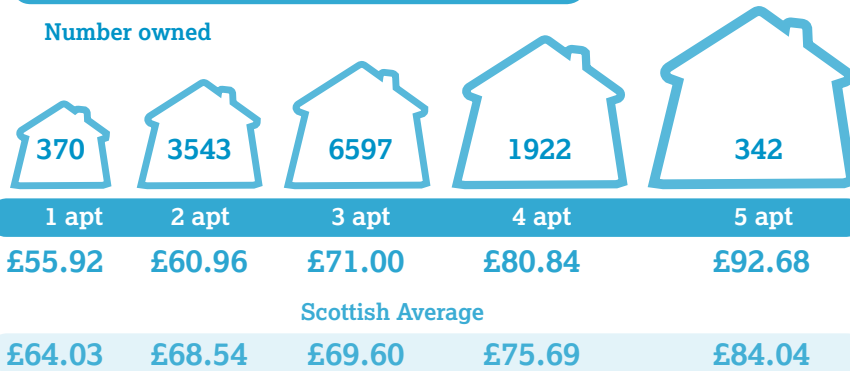
of tenants are **satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood** they live in, compared to the Scottish average of 84.9%.
Compared to 80% in **2013/14**

Homes and Rents

Dundee City Council Average weekly rents and amounts of properties managed

Average weekly rents 2014/15

Number owned



86.55%



of tenants feel that the rent for their property represent's **good value for money**, compared to the Scottish average of 76.7%
2013/14: 67%

Average weekly rent increase 2014/15

2.50%

Quality and Maintenance

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) is the Scottish Government's principal measure of housing quality in Scotland. It was introduced with a target that all homes rented from social landlords should meet this standard by April 2015.

 **93.21%**

of properties met the **Scottish Housing Quality Standard** compared to the Scottish average of 91% (4% Abayances*).

Compared to 85% in **2013/14**

** When properties exempted from the standard are discounted, 100% meet the standard.*

 **74.58%**

reactive repairs completed 'right first time'. Compared to the Scottish average of 90.2%.

Compared to 72% in **2013/14**

 **90.32%**

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

Compared to 79.3% in **2013/14**

Repairs



16.2 days

The average time taken to complete **non-emergency repairs** was 16.2 days, compared to the Scottish average of 7.9 days.

16.7 hours



The average time taken to complete **emergency repairs** was 16.7 hours, compared to the Scottish average of 5.9 hours.

Antisocial Behaviour

1643 cases

There were 1643 complaints of anti-social behaviour reported in the last year.

70.97% within target

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



Medical Adaptations

+ 393

Medical adaptations were **completed** to assist tenants in their homes



40.9 days

was the average time to complete approved medical adaptations applications. Compared to the Scottish average of 55 days.

Complaints



150 complaints

90.66% were responded to in full within the timescales set out by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, which includes 4 live cases carried over from the previous year

Tenancy Sustainment

85.93%

of new tenancies to applicants from the landlords list were **sustained for more than one year**, compared to the Scottish average of 87.99%



Gas Safety

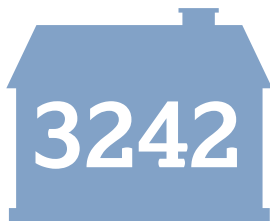


98.3%

of Dundee City Council housing stock had their Gas Safety Record renewed by the anniversary date. Compared to Scottish average of 99.49%

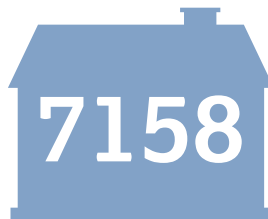
House Allocations

houses were let between 2014 and 2015



new applicants added to the list between 2014 and 2015

applicants on the waiting list at the end of the period 2014 to 2015



Value for Money



Rent collected in 2014/15

The amount of money collected for current and past rent was equal to

98.45%

of the total rent due in the year, compared to the Scottish average of 99.5%



Rent not collected in 2014/15

Dundee Council did not collect

1.58%

of rent due because homes were empty, compared to the Scottish average of 1.11%.

2013/14: 2.5%

Arrears / Evictions

Total rent due last year was **£48,395,106**



4.16%

Total rent arrears compared to the Scottish average of 5.29 %



56 tenants were evicted in 2015 for not paying rent



The Council has now approved a new Management Structure to create four Directorates: Corporate Services, City Development, Children and Families Services and Neighbourhood Services.

I am delighted that from the 1 July 2015, I have been appointed as the Executive Director for Neighbourhood Services which brings together Housing, Environment and aspects of Communities, covering Public Protection, Decentralisation, and Community Learning & Development. Neighbourhood Services will have 3 Heads of Service:-

- Community Safety and Protection
- Housing and Communities
- Environment

In addition to this a number of service reviews will be taken forward over the next few months which we hope to complete by the end of the calendar year. This restructure will give us the opportunity to look at how our services can work better together to improve outcomes for our citizens. I think this is a very exciting time for our service and believe it will allow better and more efficient services to be delivered.

Elaine Zwirlein
Executive Director, Neighbourhood Services



Housing Services has an enviable legacy of finding areas for improvement and acting on them. In the last year the department has made lots of improvements based on feedback from tenants, many of these have been made as a direct response to the work of the Scrutiny Panel and examples can be seen throughout this report. In addition some of the other improvements we have made are:

- Through secure authentication, applicants for council housing can now check their application details i.e. points, property size, type and areas they have chosen.
- Tenants were unhappy about wheelie bins being left out on the street. This has been resolved by replacing the standard bins with Euro bins, resulting in an improvement in the cleanliness of the street and a more pleasant environment for tenants.
- A new Housing Support leaflet aimed at prospective tenants/ service users has been designed and leaflets have been made available in Polish and Russian.

A link has been added to the “who can apply” section of the Housing Options web-page to take the reader to the allocations policy, as a user had commented that there was not enough information available on the page. A considerable amount of hard work has been put in by employees of the housing department at all levels to boost satisfaction with our services and I am sure this high level of satisfaction will be carried forward into the new Neighbourhood Services directorate.

Councillor John Alexander
Convenor of the Housing Committee



Email the team today:

tenant.participation@dundeecity.gov.uk

A new way to get in touch and Have Your Say

Mark Cooper: 01382 307330

Mary Docherty: 01382 307331

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