

Tenant-Led Scrutiny Programme 2021-22



Introduction

The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) sets out outcomes and standards that landlords should strive to achieve through their housing activities. The Scottish Housing Regulator emphasises that landlords must deliver quality services, involve tenants in assessing the performance of these services and be able to demonstrate value for money.

Social Landlords in Scotland are now responsible for meeting these standards and outcomes and must gather evidence that they are doing so and report on this to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) annually, in the form of their Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). In addition landlords must also issue a report to all tenants on its performance in meeting the SSHC annually.

Scottish Housing Regulator Objective

“To safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants of social landlords, people who are or may become homeless and people using housing services provided by local authorities and registered social landlords.

To monitor and report on social landlords’ performance and to intervene where necessary, to protect the interests of tenants and other service users.”

Tenant Scrutiny

Performance measured against the Charter outcomes is based largely on self-assessment which has to be verified by tenants and assessed by the Scottish Housing Regulator. Tenant scrutiny is the term being used to cover the wide range of tenant involvement activity.

Tenant Scrutiny is about tenants & other service users being actively involved in the self-assessment process. It provides opportunities for tenants and other service users to independently review how housing services are being delivered, identify what works well and recommend what could be improved.

The aims and role of the Tenant Scrutiny sub-groups within East Ayrshire are:

- To work with East Ayrshire Council's Housing Service to provide a range of opportunities for tenants to engage in tenant scrutiny of housing and related services and give their views on service standards.
- To work on behalf of tenants and other customers to ensure that housing and related services are delivered to a high standard and that service users are at the heart of the business.
- To independently review and monitor Housing Service delivery and performance.
- To collect and examine evidence to enable housing services to be reviewed and monitored.
- To report recommendations to the Senior Management Team and Elected Members on how services can be improved.
- To monitor and review agreed action plans.
- To inform other tenants and customers what the Tenant Scrutiny sub groups are doing and encourage them to get involved.

East Ayrshire Tenants and Residents Federation will consider all areas of housing and related service performance in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) and will establish Tenant Scrutiny Sub Groups to examine services from the tenant perspective identifying strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for improving the service.

The priority areas for review will be decided by EATRF and EAC's Housing Service using feedback from all available sources, including, but not limited to:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
- Annual Return on the Charter (ARC)
- Annual Report to Tenants
- Tenants
- Staff
- Tenants Satisfaction Surveys
- Complaints, compliments and suggestions

2020-21 Tenant-Led Scrutiny Programme

During the financial year 2020-21, the East Ayrshire Tenants & Residents Federation and East Ayrshire Council jointly agreed that the following services would be subject to tenant-led scrutiny within the Housing Service:

Void properties and lettable standards-

Council's new build development programme-

Review of Kitchen and Bathroom scrutiny group

To Review of customer feedback from tenants who had their kitchen or bathroom upgraded in the last 2 years Visits to recently upgraded properties Visit to a 'test house' to see flooring A review of product samples A visit to Blackwood Homes to see the equipment and technology that can be installed into homes

The Scrutiny Group submitted the final report, which includes 14 recommendations, in August 2020.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The Council's finances are split into two main areas – the General Fund, which incorporates the main areas of service provision including Education, Health & Social Care, Roads & Transport, Facilities & Property Management, etc.

The Housing Revenue Account, which deals with the management of the Council's housing stock.

General Fund services are financed by government grant and local taxation whilst the Housing Revenue Account is financed mainly by rents from houses.

The main items of income and expenditure for an HRA are:

- Rental income from houses (and other HRA assets);
- Income from the investment of Housing Revenue Account money (whether cash balances or monies received from the sale of Housing Revenue Account property);
- Expenditure on managing, maintaining, repairing and improving the council housing stock; and
- Expenditure on debt (loan charges) relating to amounts borrowed to fund capital expenditure on HRA properties (existing or new).

If you would like to get involved in inspecting either of the above services please contact the East Ayrshire Tenants & Residents Federation on 01563 524073.