

Agenda Item	10.
Report No	CS 41/13

Housing and Property Services Performance Report - 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013

Report by the Interim Director of Housing and Property

Summary

This report provides information on how the Housing and Property Service performed in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators during the first two quarters of 2013/2014.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator has set out the performance indicators that it will use to form part of its scrutiny of landlords. These replace statutory performance indicators for housing from April 2013, with the Council required to make its first Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator and annual report to tenants in May 2014.
- 1.2 This report provides information on performance in the first 6 months of 2013/14 based on the reporting framework agreed by the Finance, Housing and Resources Committee on 5 June 2013. Most of the indicators required are not directly comparable with previous statutory performance indicators. Unfortunately that means it is not possible to obtain data retrospectively to allow reporting of data trends.

2 Repairs

- 2.1 Performance on repairs is summarised in the tables below.
- 2.2 *Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	14	12		
Caithness	11	13		
Sutherland	10	9		

- 2.3 The average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs is calculated in hours, with the Highland Council target being 24 hours. Table 1 shows that the average length of time to complete emergency repairs in both Caithness and Sutherland was less than the Highland average in the first quarter but has slipped slightly in Caithness in quarter two.
- 2.4 *Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	10	9		
Caithness	9	7		
Sutherland	6	6		

2.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days. Table 2 shows that the average time to complete these in repairs Caithness and Sutherland is better than the Highland average figure.

2.6 *Table 3: % of reactive repairs completed right first time*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	89%	89%		
Caithness	90%	90%		
Sutherland	97%	97%		

2.7 The percentage of reactive repairs completed “right first time” is defined as “repairs being complete to the tenant’s satisfaction within locally agreed target timescales, without the need to return a further time”. It is not possible to collect all the information required to report definitively on this indicator. The figure shown in Table 3 is based on all day to day housing repairs completed in the period where: only one repairs request was raised; no “make good” orders were required; there was access to carry out the repair; and the repair was completed on time. Tenant satisfaction with repairs is measured through a sample survey and it has been agreed that this will be reported annually. It is not possible to report tenant satisfaction at the level of these individual repairs. The figures indicate that performance on this indicator in Caithness and Sutherland is better than the Highland average.

2.8 *Table 4: % of repairs appointments kept*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	93%	92%		
Caithness	93%	92%		
Sutherland	91%	89%		

2.9 The percentage of repairs appointments kept is gathered from the repairs appointment system which is currently in place but which has not been implemented Highland wide. It shows that performance on appointments in Caithness is the same as the Highland average however Sutherland has reduced slightly to 89%.

2.10 In gathering the information for repairs indicators we do not include instances where we have been unable to gain access to properties.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour

3.1 The national indicator is the percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported which were resolved within locally agreed targets.

3.2 *Table 5: Percentage of cases resolved within target timescales*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	95%	91%		
Caithness	92%	94%		
Sutherland	100%	100%		

3.3 The table shows that a higher percentage of cases were resolved within target timescales in Caithness and Sutherland compared to the Highland-wide figure.

4. Tenancy Management

4.1 This indicator provides information on the percentage of tenancy offers refused during the year and the percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year, by type of let. The indicator also provides information on the percentage of rent lost through properties being empty and the average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year.

4.2 *Table 6 : % of tenancy offers refused during the year*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	34%	35%		
Caithness	51%	45%		
Sutherland	51%	48%		

4.3 Table 6 shows that there is a higher rate of refusal of offers of housing than Highland-wide. This is due to the relatively low demand for housing in the North. In Sutherland one particular property has been refused 9 times since May of this year. In Caithness several properties have been refused twice, three or in a few cases four times. Area teams continue to work proactively to achieve successful allocations.

4.4 *Table 7: % new tenancies sustained for more than 1 year (by source of let)*

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Transfers				
Highland-wide	92%	92%		
Caithness	97%	97%		
Sutherland	84%	85%		
Homeless households				
Highland-wide	89%	89%		
Caithness	71%	74%		
Sutherland	75%	85%		
Housing list				
Highland-wide	81%	81%		
Caithness	73%	77%		
Sutherland	86%	81%		
Other				
Highland-wide	85%	85%		
Caithness	88%	82%		
Sutherland	86%	85%		

4.5 Table 7 shows the percentage of tenancies sustained for more than a year broken down by type of let.

4.6 *Table 8: % of rent due lost through properties being empty*

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	0.8%	0.7%		
Caithness	1.1%	0.9%		
Sutherland	0.7%	0.1%		

4.7 Table 8 shows the average rent loss due to empty houses. It shows that rent loss is higher in Caithness than Highland as a whole. Rent loss depends on the time a property is vacant. Table 9 (below) provides details of the average re-letting time. The low demand and high level of terminations impact on this area of performance.

4.8 *Table 9: Average length of time taken to re-let properties (days)*

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	41	43		
Caithness	41	45		
Sutherland	28	28		

5. Rent Arrears

5.1 There are significant differences in the way the new indicators for rent arrears are derived compared to previous indicators. In calculating the rent collected figure we include rent paid in advance and also former tenant debt collected. Sutherland rent arrears value at end September is £22,959.21 compared to £23,817.71 at end June. Caithness rent arrears value at end September is £176,365.34 compared to £145,501.68 at end June.

5.2 Focussed work by area teams including award of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) have seen a reduction of £21,000 in arrears across Caithness and Sutherland for the month of October.

5.3 *Table 10: Rent collected as a % of total rent due in the reporting year*

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	99.0%	98%		
Caithness	99%	98%		
Sutherland	98%	99%		

5.4 Table 10 shows that rent collected is around the Highland wide figure.

5.5 *Table 11: Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as a % of rent due to the reporting year*

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Highland-wide	5.08%	5.54%		
Caithness	4.03%	4.55%		
Sutherland	1.48%	1.46%		

5.6 The gross rent arrears calculation includes current and former tenant debt prior to any write off. Table 11 shows that rent arrears as a % of rent due for Caithness and Sutherland is better than the Highland average.

6. Homelessness/Homeless Prevention

6.1 Performance information on homelessness is not collected as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. However a number of indicators have been agreed by the Council.

6.2 *Table 12: Homelessness and homeless prevention*

HOMELESSNESS/HOMELESS PREVENTION HIGHLAND WIDE FIGURES	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Number of homeless presentations	212	264		
Number of open homelessness cases	293	596		

6.3 The number of homeless presentations across Highland continues to decrease. For Caithness and Sutherland a reduction down from 36 to 25 in the corresponding quarter of last year.

6.4 The homeless prevention team continues to deal with a high caseload, and the effectiveness of this approach is reflected in the reducing number of homeless presentations.

6.5 Background relating to the implementation of the Homeless Prevention Team can be found in the Housing and Social Work Committee papers of 9 March 2011 and 9 November 2011 at the following links:

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E1FF5AC5-B8E6-4F36-8804-68792848C9F0/0/Item8HSW3211.pdf>

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8460EC0A-DFCB-465F-A0F4-14123F45725A/0/Item12HSW11411.pdf>

6.6 *Table 13: Total number of prevention team cases received*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr3	Qtr4
Highland Wide	615	1423		
Caithness	39	83		
Sutherland	7	23		

6.7 Table 13 shows that the Homeless Prevention Team dealt with 60 new cases in Caithness and Sutherland during Quarter 2 of 2013/14. Details of the primary advice reasons associated with cases are given at table 14.

6.8 *Table 14: Primary Advice Reasons*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Relationship Breakdown	19	33		
Family dispute	9	16		
Notice received from landlord	10	12		
Financial Problem	1	3		
Relocation to Highlands	4	5		
Overcrowding Issue	1	1		
Prison release		2		
Antisocial Behaviour		0		

Medical Housing Need	1			
Hospital Discharge	1	1		
Poor Housing Condition	1	2		
Leaving Armed Forces		0		
Total	47	75		

6.9 During Quarter 2, 49 homeless prevention cases were closed for Caithness and Sutherland as shown in table 15.

Table 15: Total Closed Homeless Prevention Cases

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr3	Qtr 4
Highland Wide	474	913		
Caithness	31	43		
Sutherland	6	6		

6.10 Primary outcomes for Caithness and Sutherland cases are shown at Table 16.

6.11 Table 16: Primary Outcomes

	2013/14							
	Qtr 1	%	Qtr 2	%	Qtr 3	%	Qtr 4	%
Homeless Presentation	11	18%	22	22%				
Advice & Information	5	8%	11	11%				
Private Rented Sector	7	11%	12	12%				
Issues with Landlord Resolved	10	16%	7	7%				
Living with Family / Friends	5	8%	10	10%				
Support Referral								
Housed by HHR	20	34%	37	37%				
Lost Contact	2	3%	1	1%				
LIFT Scheme	1	2%						
Total	61	100 %	100	100%				

7. Implications

7.1 **Resources:** There are ongoing resource implications arising from the need to develop and maintain performance monitoring systems relating to Scottish Housing Charter Performance Indicators. This is managed within the current HRA budget.

7.2 **Legal:** The need to set up new performance monitoring and reporting systems relating to Scottish Housing Charter performance indicators is a legal requirement under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010.

7.3 There are no specific equality, climate change/carbon clever or risk implications arising from this report.

8 Recommendation

9.1 The Committee is invited to scrutinise the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013.

Designation: **Interim Director of Housing and Property**

Date: 7 November 2013

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Background Papers: Scottish Housing Regulator: The Scottish Social Housing Charter: Indicators and Context Information