

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.
- 1.3 There are 1,300 council houses in Lochaber: 529 in Caol and Mallaig; and 771 in Fort William and Ardnamurchan.

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		
Lochaber	19	14		

- 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 Lochaber is higher than the Highland average, although it has reduced in the 2nd quarter of this year. Performance remains well within the target of 24 hours.

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		
Lochaber	10	9		

2.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days. Table 2 shows that the average time to complete these repairs in Lochaber are around the same as the Highland average, and that performance has been stable over the first 2 quarters of this year.

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%		
Lochaber	88%	90%		

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 Lochaber is around the same as 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%		
Lochaber	92%	92%		

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 Lochaber is in line with the Highland average.

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%		
Lochaber	100%	71%		

3.3 The table shows the percentage of cases completed within target timescales. It shows that all complaints closed in the first quarter were within timescale, however only 71% were closed within target timescales in quarter 2. There were 7 cases completed in quarter 2, of which 5 were within timescale. The complexity and severity of cases can affect the timescale for completion.

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%		
Lochaber	20%	22%		

4.3 Table 6 shows that there is a lower rate of refusal of offers of housing in Lochaber than Highland-wide, reflecting the very high demand for housing locally. In total 77 offers were made in the last 6 months, of which 17 were refused. Of these refusals 3 properties have been refused twice and 1 property has been refused 3 times.

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%		
Lochaber	96%	93%		
Homeless households				
Highland-wide	89%	89%		
Lochaber	94%	90%		
Housing list				
Highland-wide	81%	82%		
Lochaber	90%	84%		
Other				
Highland-wide	85%	68%		
Lochaber	100%	100%		

4.5 Table 7 shows the percentage of tenancies sustained for more than a year broken down by type of let. Tenancy sustainment in Lochaber is consistently

above the Highland average.

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%		
Lochaber	0.5%	0.4%		

4.7 Table 8 shows the average rent loss due to empty houses. It shows that rent loss is lower in Lochaber than the Highland average. Rent loss depends on the time a property is vacant. Table 9 (below) provides details of the average reletting time.

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		
Lochaber	34	38		

4.9 Table 9 shows that the average length of time to relet empty houses is below the Highland average, although both figures have increased in quarter 2. Improving performance on reletting homes is a key priority for the service.

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 which may result in a figure of over 100%.

5.2 At 30 September current tenant rent arrears for Lochaber are £162,019.

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%		
Lochaber	101%	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%		
Lochaber	4.66%	5.33%		

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 is slightly lower 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	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Number of homeless presentations (cumulative)	25	52		
Number of open homelessness cases	46	51		

6.3 The post of Homeless Prevention Officer for Lochaber was vacant during Quarters 1 and 2 of 2012/13 and as a result no homeless prevention casework has been recorded. A new member of staff has been recruited, based at Lochaber House in Fort William but also working from the Mallaig and Acharacle service points to carry out homeless prevention interviews. Future reports will contain statistics on homelessness prevention activity.

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

8.1 Committee is asked 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: 06 November 2013

Author: David Goldie, Head of Housing