

**The Highland Council**  
**Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee**

27 May 2014

Agenda Item	<b>12.</b>
Report No	<b>CS/20/14</b>

**Housing Performance Report - 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014**

**Report by the Director of Community Services**

**Summary**

This report provides information on housing performance in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators during the year 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 in 2014 and an annual report to tenants later this year.
- 1.2 This report provides information on performance for the first year 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 Members have, since this meeting, requested information in a more straightforward format which will allow comparison of trends on key indicators. There are a number of other performance indicators for housing management performance. Information on these indicators is presented in tabular format at **Appendix 1**.

**2. Repairs**

- 2.1 The key indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete emergency and non-emergency repairs. As these indicators only applied from 1 April 2013 we have no historical data.
- 2.2 The average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs is calculated in hours with the Highland Council target being 15 hours.

2.3 *Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)*

	No of Houses	2013/14			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
North, West & Central Sutherland	393	9.8	9	8.7	7.5
Thurso	588	13.3	9.8	10.5	10.5
Wick	950	6.9	10	8.8	9.0
Landward Caithness	583	15.6	20.8	15.9	14.2
East Sutherland & Edderton	532	9.8	9.3	9.1	8.4
<b>Highland</b>	<b>13678</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>14.5</b>

2.4 The data shows that the average length of time to complete emergency repairs in Caithness and Sutherland was better than the Highland average on 14.5 hours and within the target of 15 hours.

2.5 *Table 2 : Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)*

	No of Houses	2013/14			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
North, West & Central Sutherland	393	5.7	5.7	6.5	5.9
Thurso	588	7.8	6.8	6.7	6.5
Wick	950	9.8	7.2	7.2	6.8
Landward Caithness	583	8.9	7.2	7.1	7.0
East Sutherland & Edderton	532	5.9	5.5	6.1	5.9
<b>Highland</b>	<b>13678</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>8.7</b>

2.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days. Table 2 shows that the average time to complete these repairs in Caithness and Sutherland wards is better than the Highland average figure of 8.7 and also the target of 10 working days.

2.6 Overall repairs completion times are performing well across the Caithness and Sutherland area. This is welcome news and it is hoped this trend will continue for future reports. In gathering the information for repairs indicators we do not include instances where we have been unable to gain access to properties.

### 3. Tenancy Management

3.1 The table below provides information on the average re-let time showing the trend back 5 years and highlighting the same quarter in previous years for comparison.

3.2 *Table 3 : Average re-let time (days)*

	No of Houses	No of relets	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
			Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4
North, West & Central Sutherland	393	38	19.3	15.6	23.5	15.8	39.7	29.3
Thurso	588	80	28.0	21.3	20.8	35.1	36.7	45.1
Wick	950	128	21.4	24.7	32.3	36.5	33.3	63.2
Landward Caithness	583	69	27.8	28.5	31.5	38.6	40.5	48.7
East Sutherland & Eddertor	532	51	14.0	8.6	8.6	20.2	23.9	24.3
Highland	<b>13678</b>	<b>1141</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>39.1</b>

3.3 Performance on re-letting void properties is mixed across the wards. The overall figure for Highland for quarter 3 is currently 39.1 days against the target of 35 working days.

3.4 In this final quarter Thurso, Wick and Landward Caithness provide challenges in achieving re-let targets.

3.5 The Head of Housing is leading work on reviewing the void process Highland-wide, and a report will be presented to the Community Services Committee in August. There are some issues that are specific to parts of Caithness and a working group with partner registered social landlords who have reported similar problems has been established to look in more detail at this area of business and performance pressure. In the meantime the area teams continue work to explore all avenues for securing outcomes for applicants.

#### 4. Rent Arrears

4.1 A key indicator for rent arrears is considered to be the value of current rent arrears. The chart at 4.3 provides information on current rent arrears going back 5 years and shows the comparative figure for the same quarter in previous years.

4.2 The Highland wide current rent arrears figure is £1,252,748.2. The total value of arrears for Sutherland at the end of the fourth quarter is £24,181 and for Caithness £141,257. Caithness and Sutherland were just £1,613 short of the same position last year, considering the impact of the second bedroom restrictions, and the very challenging financial climate, this is an excellent reflection of the significant effort put in by the area team.

4.3 *Table 4 : Current Rent Arrears*

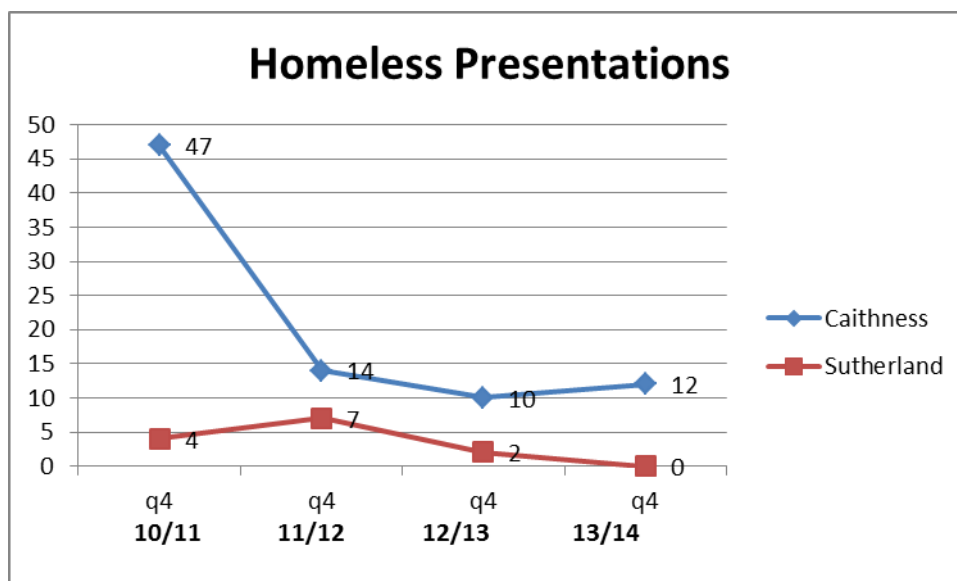
	No of Houses	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
		Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4	Q4
North, West & Central Sutherland	393	10287	7372	10506	6399	8791	7090
Thurso	588	51186	50236	44690	25011	30800	30163
Wick	950	78041	83637	67535	63364	84030	78534
Landward Caithness	583	35261	34808	26105	26434	26379	32560
East Sutherland & Eddertor	532	22351	9541	8236	9567	13729	17091
Highland	<b>13678</b>	<b>1349623</b>	<b>1297127</b>	<b>1056787</b>	<b>956249</b>	<b>1183079</b>	<b>1252748</b>

4.4 Credits of Housing Benefit, including DHP and post office rental payments relating to accounts for the 2013/14 financial year are often posted to the rent accounts during the first week of the 2014/15 financial year, which obviously impacts on the year end position.

## 5. Homelessness/Homeless Prevention

5.1 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.

### 5.2 Chart 5 : Homeless Presentations



5.3 Chart 5 details the number of homeless presentations received at each of the Area offices and gives details back to 2010/11.

5.4 Homeless presentations at the quarter ending 31 March 2013 show there was an increase of 2 for Caithness against the same quarter last year; however, there were no presentations for Sutherland in the last quarter of 2013/14. The homeless prevention team continues to manage a high caseload.

5.5 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/rdoonlyres/E1FF5AC5-B8E6-4F36-8804-68792848C9F0/0/Item8HSW3211.pdf>

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

5.6 *Table 6: Total number of prevention team cases received*

	2013/14			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr3	Qtr4
<b>Highland Wide</b>	615	1423	1590	<b>2211</b>
Caithness	39	83	133	<b>175</b>
Sutherland	7	23	34	<b>55</b>

5.7 Table 6 shows that the Homeless Prevention Team dealt with a total of 63 new cases in Caithness and Sutherland during Quarter 4 of 2013/14. Details of the primary advice reasons associated with cases are given at table 7; this provides Members with a greater understanding of the associated factors impacting on clients presenting to the team for services.

5.8 *Table 7: Primary Advice Reasons*

	<b>2013/14</b>			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Relationship Breakdown	19	33	53	75
Family dispute	9	16	32	46
Notice received from landlord	10	12	37	43
Financial Problem	1	3	10	15
Relocation to Highlands	4	5	15	19
Overcrowding Issue	1	1	4	5
Prison release		2	6	7
Antisocial Behaviour		0	3	7
Medical Housing Need	1			2
Hospital Discharge	1	1	1	1
Poor Housing Condition	1	2	6	9
Leaving Armed Forces		0		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>230</b>

5.9 During Quarter 4, 171 homeless prevention cases were closed for Caithness and Sutherland, as shown in table 8.

*Table 8: Total Closed Homeless Prevention Cases*

	<b>2013/14</b>			
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr3	Qtr 4
<b>Highland Wide</b>	474	913	1304	<b>1826</b>
Caithness	31	43	114	<b>142</b>
Sutherland	6	6	18	<b>29</b>

5.10 Primary outcomes for Caithness and Sutherland cases are shown at Table 9.

*Table 9: Primary Outcomes*

	<b>2013/14</b>							
	Qtr 1	%	Qtr 2	%	Qtr 3	%	Qtr 4	%
Homeless Presentation	11	18%	22	22%	44	25%	61	
Advice & Information	5	8%	11	11%	18	10%	18	
Private Rented Sector	7	11%	12	12%	14	9%	19	
Issues with Landlord Resolved	10	16%	7	7%	6	3%	6	
Living with Family / Friends	5	8%	10	10%	20	12%	11	
Support Referral								
Housed by HHR	20	34%	37	37%	63	37%	75	
Lost Contact	2	3%	1	1%	7	4%	10	
LIFT Scheme	1	2%						
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>		<b>100</b>		<b>172</b>		<b>200</b>	

## 6. Implications

- 6.1 **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.
- 6.2 **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.
- 6.3 There are no known specific equality, climate change/carbon clever; risk or Gaelic implications arising from this report.

### Recommendation

Committee is asked to scrutinise the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 14 May 2014

Author: Campbell Stewart, Area Community Services Manager  
(Caithness and Sutherland)

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

**CAITHNESS**

HAP SPI 13-14	13/14	Target	Qtr4	Qtr3	Qtr2	Qtr1
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness		No target set	55.76	53.04	52.46	52.33
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	Amber	95%	92.56	92.28	92.30	93.46
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	Amber	98%	100.90	100.38	98.84	102.29
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	Amber	92%	91.94	91.38	90.56	89.97
Number of Prevention cases - Caithness		No target set	175	141	65	45
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	Green	5%	3.59	4.56	4.59	4.03
Ave time to complete non emergency repairs (days) - Caithness	Green	10 days	6.85	7.10	7.80	9.22
Ave time to complete emergency repairs (hours) - Caithness	Green	15 hours	11.15	11.75	13.60	11.03
Ave time taken to re-let - Caithness	Red	35 days	52.93	47.86	44.51	38.92
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	Green	2%	1.81	1.57	1.41	0.99
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	Red	90%	78.84	79.73	78.15	75.53
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness		No target set	16.04	16.10	17.14	17.22
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer - Caithness	Green	100%	100.00	100.00	78.95	100.00
% court actions which resulted in eviction - Caithness	Green	36%	11.11	21.74	27.78	6.67

**SUTHERLAND**

HAP SPI 13-14	13/14	Target	Qtr4	Qtr3	Qtr2	Qtr1
Tenancy offers refused - Sutherland		No target set	51.79	46.89	48.55	49.58
Repairs appointments kept - Sutherland	Amber	95%	91.84	90.61	89.44	91.00
Rent collected as % of rent due - Sutherland	Amber	98%	101.99	101.60	101.21	111.42
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Sutherland	Green	92%	97.40	97.42	97.55	96.93
Number of Prevention cases - Sutherland		No target set	55	34	10	10
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Sutherland	Green	5%	1.39	1.49	1.47	1.36
Ave time to complete non emergency repairs (days) - Sutherland	Green	10 days	5.99	6.18	5.72	5.57
Ave time to complete emergency repairs (hours) - Sutherland	Green	15 hours	8.32	9.28	9.44	9.51
Ave time taken to re-let - Sutherland	Green	35 days	25.19	24.73	26.55	29.90
% rent loss through voids - Sutherland	Green	2%	0.65	0.72	0.79	0.86
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Sutherland	Red	90%	83.07	85.89	86.65	85.48
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Sutherland		No target set	11.04	10.76	11.04	10.93
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer - Sutherland	Green	100%	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% court actions which resulted in eviction - Sutherland	Green	36%	5.26	0.00	0.00	0.00