

Agenda Item	5
Report No	ERA/11/23

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Easter Ross Area Committee

Date: 22 May 2023

Report Title: Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information on how the Housing Section performed in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 31 March 2023

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

3 Implications

- 3.1 Resource - There are no resource implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 Legal - There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) - There are no equality implications arising from this report.
- 3.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever - There are no climate change/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Risk - Risk is managed through regular review and reporting to allow corrective action to be taken if necessary.
- 3.6 Gaelic - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4 Background

- 4.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has set out the performance indicators that it will use in its scrutiny of landlords.
- 4.2 This report provides key performance information based on the reporting framework recommended by the SHR.
- 4.3 Further performance information by Council Ward can be found on the Highland Council Intranet ward reporting pages.
http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/info/13/members_intranet/37/ward_reporting/2
- 4.4 In accordance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter guidance, the Repairs, Tenancy Management and Rent Arrears figures are cumulative, while the Homeless Presentations figures are given for each separate quarter.
- 4.5 Scottish Housing Network (SHN) benchmark information, derived from the performance of all Scottish Landlords, has also been provided where available.

5 Repairs

- 5.1 The key indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete Emergency repairs and Non-emergency repairs.
- 5.2 The average length of time taken to complete Emergency repairs is calculated in hours.
- 5.3 **Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)**

Target 14 hours
2021/22 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 4.2 hours

EME	No of Houses	2022/23			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Cromarty Firth	1445	12.5	9.2	7.4	4.8
Tain & Easter Ross	653	3.8	4.2	8.9	7.1
Highland	14850	10.5	8.1	7.7	5.5

- 5.4 The average response time for emergency repairs for both Easter Ross wards has significantly improved and is well within the 14 hour target. Emergency repairs remain a priority for the service.
- 5.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days.

- 5.6 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**
- Target 8 days**
2021/22 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 8.9 days

NON-EME	No of Houses	2022/23			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Cromarty Firth	1445	9.3	7.8	8.2	8.5
Tain & Easter Ross	653	4.9	5.2	5.9	6.7
Highland	14850	7.2	6.3	6.8	7.6

- 5.7 The average non-emergency repair time in Cromarty Firth has increased and is outwith the 8 day target. Efforts are being made to improve performance within this ward. Non-emergency repairs have been affected by the decision to suspend non-essential works, although this has now been lifted and works are being progressed again.
- 5.8 Non-emergency repairs in Tain and Easter Ross remain within the 8 day target.
- 5.9 In gathering the information for repairs indicators, we do not include instances where we have been unable to gain access to properties. This is in accordance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter guidance.

6 Tenancy Management

- 6.1 The chart below provides information on the average re-let time, showing the trend for the last 5 Quarters.

6.2 **Table 3: Average re-let time (days) Target 35 days
2021/22 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 51.6 days**

Avg relet time, ARC	No of Houses	No of relets	2021/22	2022/23			
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Cromarty Firth	1445	121	32.36	22.32	21.58	21.76	25.48
Tain & Easter Ross	653	52	22.75	42.28	38.52	34.88	32.58
Highland	14850	1353	35.49	40.55	35.14	32.84	32.07

- 6.3 Re-let performance across both Easter Ross wards is within the 35 day target. The performance in Cromarty Firth includes new build properties that we received in Evanton. The letting of new build properties artificially shows improved performance in re-let times. Without these newbuild properties included the performance in Cromarty Firth would remain within target at 29.36 days.

7 Rent Arrears

- 7.1 A key indicator for rent arrears is considered to be the value of current rent arrears. The table below shows the comparative figure for the last 5 Quarters.

7.2 **Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears**

Rent arrears	No of Houses	2021/22	2022/23			
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Cromarty Firth	1445	260,748	266,203	313,950	333,732	350,403
Tain & Easter Ross	653	109,448	116,564	134,556	148,490	156,145

- 7.3 The cost of living crisis continues to impact on rent arrears which is a trend across Highland. The Housing team continue to work with tenants to provide support, help and advice in relation to their rent arrears concerns, signposting to external agencies and completing referrals to Housing Support and Welfare Support where suitable.

7.4 The Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act introduced a ban on evictions when arrears are below £2250. We are now progressing high level cases to court through the Councils arrears policy. This decision is only taken where all attempts to get tenants to engage with the housing team and make arrangements to repay their arrears have failed.

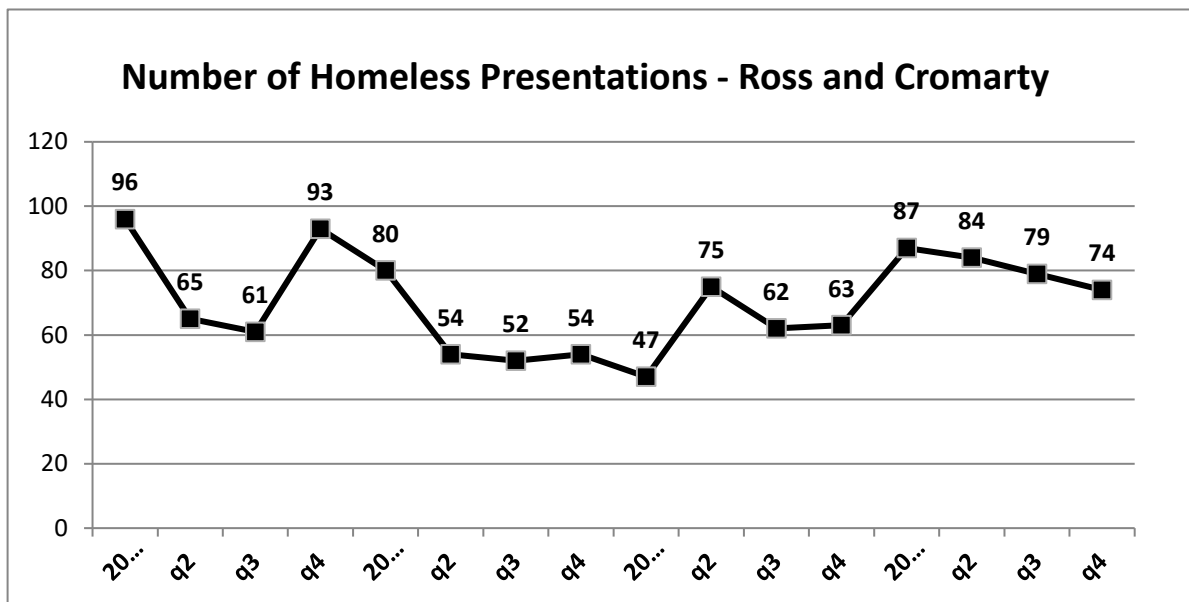
8 Homelessness

8.1 Performance information on homelessness is not collected as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter return, however a number of indicators have been agreed for reporting to Local Committees.

8.2 Table 5 shows the combined number of homeless presentations received across the Ross & Cromarty Local Committee Areas. It is not possible to disaggregate these figures.

8.3 There were 372 presentations across Highland at the end of Q4 2022/23. 74 of these were in Ross & Cromarty.

8.4 **Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



Designation: Executive Chief Officer - Housing and Property

Date: 22 May 2023

Author: Jake Mitchell, Housing Manager (North)
Colin Sharp, Repairs Manager (North)

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