

We would like to thank all of the tenants who have worked with us to produce this report.

Contact us, we want your feedback!

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# SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER 2013-2014 TENANTS REPORT



Camlachie House, 40 Barrowfield Drive, Camlachie, Glasgow, G21 1HG.



# WELCOME

Welcome to West of Scotland Housing Association's first Annual Performance Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

We hope this report fully informs all our tenants and other service users about how well we have performed against our own targets during 2013/14. We have presented this information within outcomes as specified by the Scottish Housing Regulator, and have compiled the report with the assistance of our Tenants Advisory Group.

As a tenant of West of Scotland Housing Association (WSHA), I believe it is



**Katie McLeod**  
Chairperson, West of Scotland Housing Association.

important that all tenants have key information on how our rent and service charges are used to provide value for money. I also believe it is important for tenants to be aware of the wider activities of WSHA in terms of our Sustainable Communities agenda.

Like all Registered Social Landlords in Scotland, WSHA has challenges in meeting the needs and aspirations of our customers and communities. We hope to meet those challenges by being a provider of the best services we can, now and in the future, as part of our aim of providing tenants with the best homes, the best services, and the best communities we possibly can.

I hope you find the information in this report useful. We would really appreciate your comments on the style and on areas where our performance is strong, and where we need to improve. We would be delighted to hear your comments.



## Key to symbols

These will show how we are performing against our targets.



**Thumbs up**  
Performance met/  
exceeded target



**Thumbs down**  
Performance not  
met target

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# SOME KEY FACTS ABOUT US

Key facts about WSHA as at 31 March 2014

**3,182**  
homes owned

**61**  
shared owners

**423**  
homes factored

**2,023**  
waiting list applicants

**319**  
new tenancies

**65**  
office based staff



# WHAT IS THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER?

The Scottish Social Housing Charter was introduced by the Scottish Government in April 2012.

It requires all Registered Social Landlords to report on how they perform against a number of outcomes. It sets out the standards our customers should expect us to achieve when providing services.

A key requirement of the performance report issued to customers is that it should be clear and user friendly. We hope, with the help of your feedback, we can make better decisions on our policies and procedures, particularly when setting priorities.

This report also contains our plan for continually improving our key services. The plan aims to be customer focussed and responsive to the needs of our communities.



Property size	Number of properties this size	Average weekly rent	National average weekly rent
1 Apartment	6	£71.91	£59.16
2 Apartment	1,121	£65.48	£65.10
3 Apartment	1,443	£73.35	£67.08
4 Apartment	526	£81.80	£72.96
5 Apartment	86	£90.75	£81.63

# CUSTOMER LANDLORD RELATIONSHIP

## Outcome:

Equalities - Every tenant and customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing services.



## Did you know?

We were delighted to receive an award during the year from 'Uniting Nations in Scotland.' Humza Yousaf, Minister of External Affairs and International Development said that we provide: "The best housing services for refugee tenants in Glasgow." He can be seen here with Colin Turnbull, Director of Operations, WSHA and Inspector Alistair Muir, Safer Communities Greater Glasgow, Police Scotland.

## How did we do in 2013/14?

We are committed to meeting the diverse needs of our customers and tenants, and we strive to shape our services to make sure everyone is treated fairly and has the same opportunities and access, regardless of their circumstances and background.

We want our staff to be aware and knowledgeable about diversity and equality, to ensure it is reflected in how we deliver services. To achieve this we carry out regular staff training on issues such as mental health awareness, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

**Last year we carried out 20 training sessions for staff on equality related issues.**



## Did you know?

We are pleased that in our 2013 residents' survey, 84% of tenants felt they had been treated fairly.

- Both our housing offices are wheelchair accessible
- Our offices have induction or hearing loops available to assist sensory impaired customers
- Many of our customers do not have English as their first language – we work with Language is Everything to provide telephone translation or interpreters when required
- We provide information in a range of formats to assist those who find it difficult to communicate with us through language barriers or sensory impairments
- We have private interview facilities. Customers can be seen by a male or female member of staff and we carry out home visits when required

## Providing a variety of housing for varied needs

As our tenants get older, we try to support them to stay in their family homes as long as possible. We do this by carrying out adaptations to their existing properties, for example installing ramps or walk-in showers.

Last year we obtained £334,619 in grants to improve the quality of our tenants' lives by carrying out adaptations to 105 homes.



At WSHA, we have:

**187**

Sheltered Houses with low level warden support

**10**

Very Sheltered Houses for elderly tenants requiring extra support

**391**

Amenity Houses for tenants over 50

Specially adapted properties built to meet the needs of our less able tenants

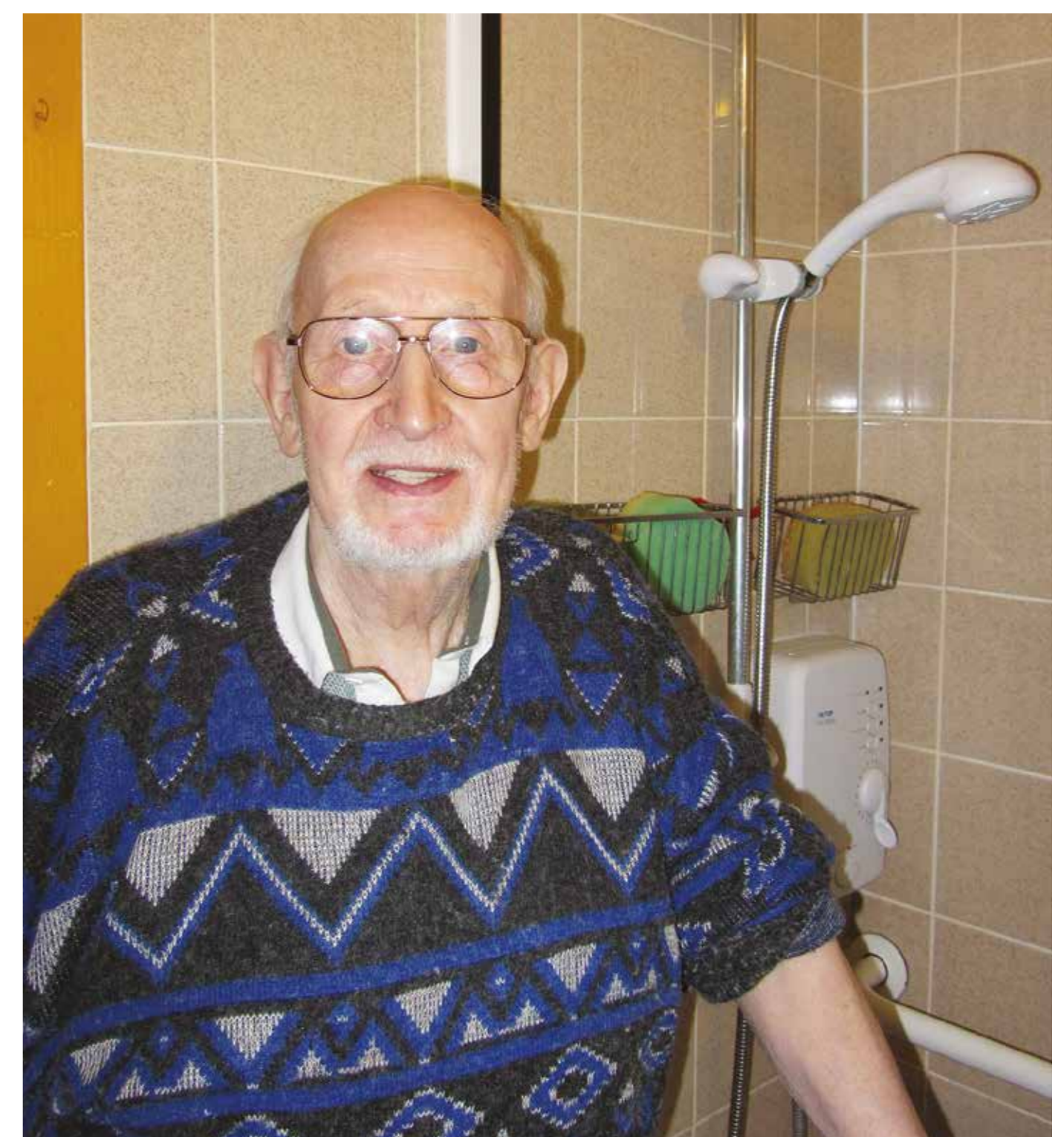
We also lease properties to partner agencies who provide specialist support to tenants with specific needs

We work in partnership with specialist organisations to help rehouse vulnerable people looking for housing. This includes Women's Aid and the Scottish Refugee Council. We have referral arrangements in place which guarantee we let seven houses each year to these groups.

## Going Forward

We record and monitor the age, ethnicity and disability of our tenants and applicants for housing. This information helps us to plan and shape our services for the future. We intend to improve on the information and will carry out a comprehensive survey of all our tenants in the coming year.

We base our policies around our commitment to equalities. We will improve this by carrying out Equality Impact Assessments in all policy reviews and new policies.



## Keeping in touch

Good two-way communication is essential. It means giving tenants and customers clear information on our services and making it easy for them to give us feedback, including complaints.

It is important for us to use feedback to improve our services.

We provide a number of ways for our tenants and customers to get in touch with us:

- By telephone – by giving tenants a number of options when they call, they get straight through to the correct person they need to speak to

### Outcome:

Communication - Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need. It should also be easy to find out how and why their landlord makes decisions and more information about the services provided.



- By calling in at our housing offices. We can also visit tenants in their home if this is easier for them
- By email or via our website
- By Facebook and Twitter

It is important tenants and residents are aware of how our service is developing, of any new initiatives, and of our performance and customer satisfaction.



### Did you know?

In our 2013 residents' survey, 85% of tenants found it easy to deal with us.

### Did you know?

In 2013/14, 95% of tenants and customers telephoning us, found staff courteous and professional.

### Did you know?

In our 2013 Tenants and Residents' survey 85% of tenants felt WSHA was good at keeping them informed about its services compared with the national average of 83.9%.



We use a range of ways to communicate this to tenants and residents:

- We issue our newsletter WestWorld every quarter
- We have television screens in our housing offices providing current information to visitors
- Our website gives information on our services and performance

The views of our tenants and customers and their satisfaction levels are important to

us. They show us how well our services are being delivered and how we can improve.

We carry out an annual satisfaction survey with a third of our tenants and residents each year. This means that every tenant can let us know their views over a three year period.

You will see the results of this annual satisfaction survey in the relevant sections throughout this Charter Report. We recognise there are a number of areas where

we want to improve our performance, and we will be working on these over the next year.

As well as our annual tenants and resident's survey, we carry out a range of other surveys to gather information on customer satisfaction about different parts of our service. These include applying for a house, our welfare rights service and our repairs service.

## Tenant participation

We believe our tenants should have a significant role in shaping the services you receive. To do this we provide a range of ways you can become involved in the decision making process and give your views and priorities on our services and future direction.

Our approach to Tenant Participation is set out within our Tenant Participation Strategy. We recognize that a 'one size fits all' approach to participation does not work as people are comfortable with different methods of involvement.

### Outcome:

Participation - Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlords' decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.



We provide the following ways to get involved:

### Management Committee

We support our tenants' capacity to influence the decision making process through our Management Committee. They meet monthly and govern the work of WSHA, including our policies, performance, financial affairs and future strategy. The Committee is made up of volunteers and eight out the 15 places on the Committee are set aside for tenants.

### Tenants Advisory Group (TAG)

Our TAG group is made up of around 20 tenants from across WSHA and meets every three months. They are consulted on all policy reviews, legislative changes, proposed amendments to working practices and any significant issues affecting tenants. All day to day tenancy related issues are usually discussed at TAG prior to our Management Committee.

### Tenant Consultation Panel

We have 61 tenants who are happy to give their views on any policy and housing related matters without attending meetings. This



approach suits tenants who are unable to travel or who have family commitments they may need to work around.

### Tenants Groups

We have a number of tenants groups who represent local communities. We work in partnership with these groups and assist them to develop. We have a Scheme of Support for tenants groups, which provides financial assistance and help with administration activities for the groups.



### Did you know?

In our 2013 Tenants and Residents Survey, 79.1% of tenants were satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in the decision making process.



## Annual Tenants Conference 2013

In September last year 78 tenants attended our Annual Conference. Organised by staff and tenants and held in our G31 Community Centre, the theme was “More than just Houses” focusing on communities. The conference gave tenants the opportunity, through a series of workshops, to give their views on how WSHA would work with them to meet the challenges of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. To ensure tenants have the capacity for meaningful input into the decision making process, we provide training and development opportunities.

Last year, we arranged training on Effective Meetings, Governance, and tenants attended the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Annual Tenants Conference and Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH) Volunteers Conference. This also allowed tenants to network and learn from other Association tenants.

We are always looking at new ways to gather tenants’ views on our services so we can improve them.



## Rate your estate

We introduced Rate Your Estate during the year. This scheme brings together a group of tenants who carry out programmed on-site inspections of estates, looking at a range of issues, including communal

close cleanliness, gardens and shrubbery. The team rate how well they are being kept and work closely with neighbourhood staff to prioritise areas for improvement. There is a local budget available, and in conjunction with staff, tenants are able to influence where the money would be best used.



## Did you know?

WSHA and the Tenant Inspection Group were awarded a Good Practice Award from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) for ‘outstanding work in and lasting contribution to tenant involvement’.





## Tenant scrutiny

Tenant Scrutiny is a key aspect of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. It's about using our customer experience to improve services and to challenge WSHA to improve outcomes for tenants. It is about driving up performance and satisfaction for service users.

We have agreed with the Tenants Advisory Group that repairs should be the first service that is scrutinised.

## Going forward

We will review our Tenant Participation Policy involving residents in the process to encourage more involvement in decision-making processes, and to support their capacity to influence decisions about housing policies and services.

We will carry out an audit of all staff, and raise awareness to ensure they understand and support our commitment to Tenant Participation.

We will develop our approach to Tenant Scrutiny and agree with tenants the service areas to be targeted.



## Our repairs service

Keeping our homes in a good state of repair is important to our tenants - 87.5% of tenants said their specific repairs had been carried out to their satisfaction.

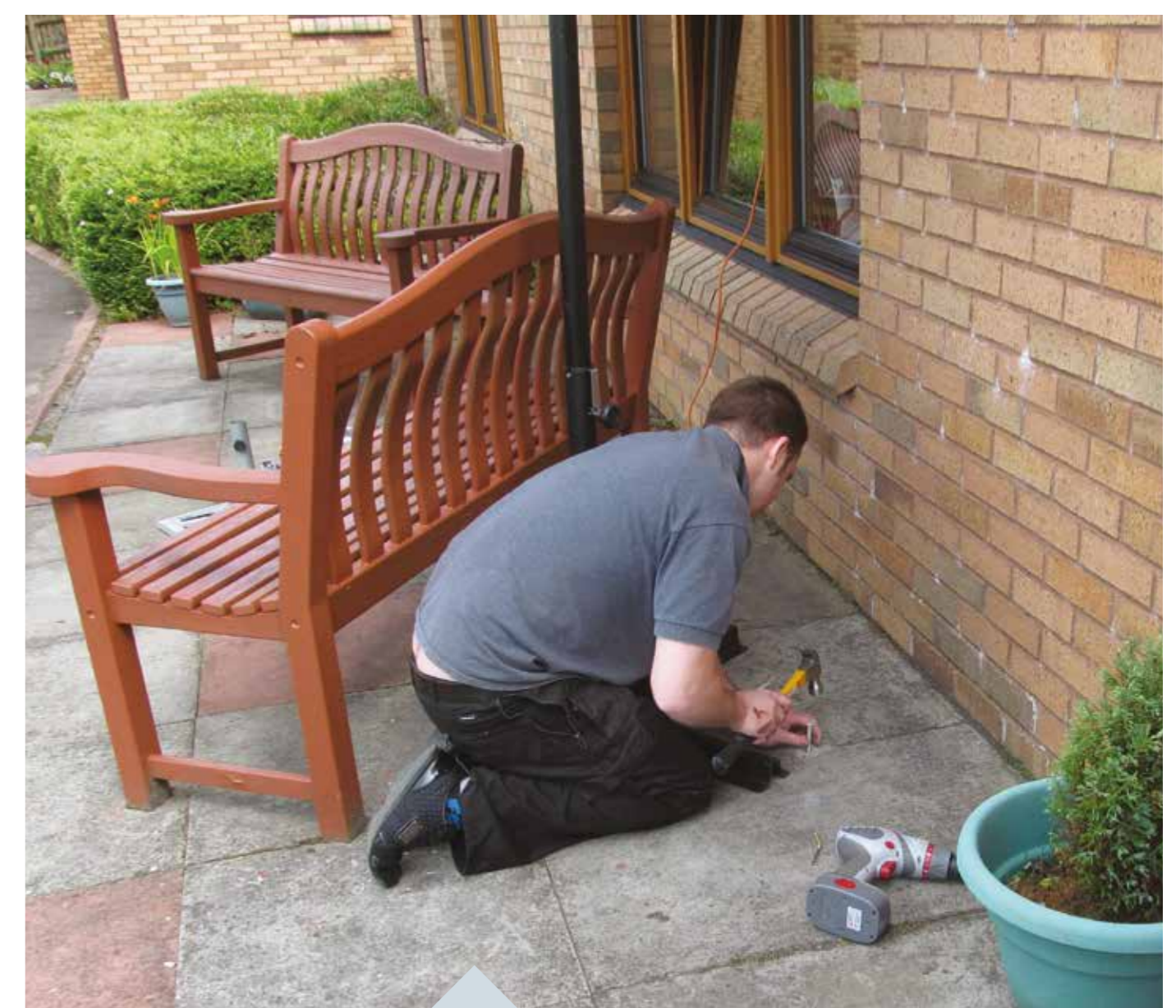
We don't always get it right – through our surveys we can identify those areas where we need to improve.

Complaints are also important to us – we can learn from them, put them right and improve our services!

Our complaints process is based on the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman's Model Complaints Handling Procedure.

Last year we received **161** complaints across a variety of our services. The majority of these were Grounds Maintenance (60) and Repairs (67).

In total, **109** of these complaints were upheld. This means we felt the complainants had reason to complain and we took steps to rectify their issues.



### You said:

When carrying out repairs the tradesmen were not always keeping you informed about any follow up work required.

### We did:

Our tradesmen now leave a card with details of what follow up work is required and when this will be completed.

We also use these complaints to improve our services:

**You said:**

Our Grounds Maintenance Contractor was not keeping to the agreed programme of cuts or the standard of work was poor.

**We did:**

We worked closely with the contractors to resolve these issues and the service has greatly improved.

**You said:**

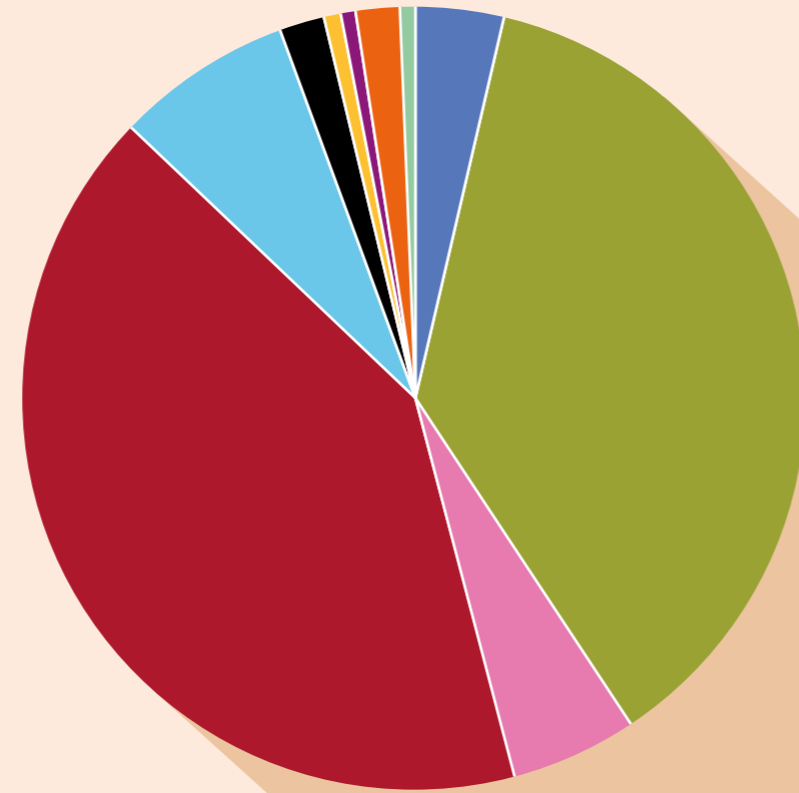
There were a lot of repeat visits by tradesmen before shower defects could be identified and rectified.

**We did:**

Our main contractor now has a 'shower doctor' who attends and diagnoses shower defects.

**Complaint Types**

- Estate Management 6
- Ground Maintenance 60
- Planned or Major Repairs 8
- Repairs 66
- Staff 12
- Allocations 3
- Rent 1
- Anti Social Behaviour 1
- Factoring 3
- Other 1



**Going forward**

We are reviewing how we gather and present information on our performance and satisfaction levels to make it easier to understand and more meaningful for our tenants and customers.

We now have a dedicated staff member who will ensure the information on our website is kept up to date and reflects what is happening in WSHA and across our communities.

# HOUSING QUALITY AND MAINTENANCE

## Scottish housing quality and standard



89.2% of our homes met the Scottish Housing quality standard compared to the national average of 84.1%.

This figure is a reflection of the major repairs projects carried out by WSHA. In the last two years WSHA has spent over £2.3 million on major repairs projects.



80.5% of tenants who had repairs carried out in the last 12 months were satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service compared to the national average of 84.1%.



We listened to our tenants about what would improve their satisfaction with the repairs service. They identified communication issues as being the most frustrating.

This can often be when a job develops into a more complex job, or additional trades are required or the trade who attends requires more materials.

**Outcome:**

Tenants' homes as a minimum meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue

to meet it thereafter. When allocated, homes are always clean and tidy and in a good state of repair.


We acknowledge this can happen in the course of a repair, but need to improve the hand over between trades and informing our tenants of what is going on.

To address this, we have introduced a card system that the attending tradesperson should use to advise the tenant what will happen next and when.

The card header has the statement 'Sorry! We need to come back...' The card is completed with the tenant and left with them to confirm why and when they need to call back.

Telephone contact details of the supervisor managing the repair along with the agreed date when the next stage of the repair should take place and will be included on the card.

We are piloting this with our main contractor and will amend the card to extend to other contractors working with us in the provision of the reactive repairs service.


 84.3% of reactive repairs carried out in the last year were completed right first time compared with the national average of 87.9%.

Repairs done right first time, is a new performance indicator that we have been




asked to report on this year. The type of repairs that qualify for this assessment are probably best described as, repairs of single trade and short duration, excluding emergency repairs and repairs that are more complex and would require several visits to complete the work. 84.3% of repairs completed last year were right first time. We are looking at the 15.7% that failed to meet this standard and ways of reducing this.

Our aim is to increase the number of jobs done right first time by working with our staff, customers and contractors. We believe that if we achieve this we will increase the tenant satisfaction with the repairs service.

 5.6 hours was the average number of hours taken to complete emergency repairs compared to the national average of 7.1 hours.

**Error when reporting to the regulator:** In our submission to the Housing Regulator for this year's Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) we identified we had completed 8,396 response repairs. However, an audit of repair completions, identified a further 599 jobs which were completed and paid but not recorded. We re-calculated our repair performance by adding the results of the additional 599 jobs to our previously calculated totals. The changes had no significant impact on the performance figures previously reported. We have put measures in place to prevent this reoccurring.

Last year, we carried out 1,704 emergency repairs and all of them were attended to and completed within 24 hours.

 4.1 days was the average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs compared to the national average of 8.0 days.

WSHA operate a repairs appointment system and only 49.2% of landlords operate a repairs appointment system. 90.9% of appointments were kept compared to the national average of 92.5%.



We aim to make appointments for contractors to attend at a time that suits our tenants and matches our available resource. Our tenants informed us at last year's tenants' conference that offering an appointment for a repair to be carried out was important to them.

We have worked with our principal maintenance contractor City Building to formalise appointments. We now use a diary system which identifies slots in the working day where trades are available. We then discuss with the tenant and agree an appointment slot which suits them, at the time of raising the repair order.

We will continue to develop the appointment principle with all contractors for jobs we believe are suitable for appointments.

85% tenants were satisfied with their home when moving in.

We are putting our void repair service out to competitive tender which should make our void process more efficient and give better value for money.

80% of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their homes.



**Gas Safety performance** - We inspect our gas appliances and pipework every ten months. We completed last year's programme six weeks ahead of schedule.

**SHQS** - We have to comply with the Scottish Housing Standard by 1 April 2015 and are completing the last few contracts this year in time for the compliance date.

**Major improvements** – During the year we invested £1.052 million in our tenants' homes. This allowed us to install 50 new kitchens and 62 bathrooms.

#### 2014/15 Action Plan:

Quality of housing	Intended impact
Review and Implement Asset Management Strategy	This will go to management committee in October 2014
Implement five year programme	We will start implementing the five year programme with effect from 1 April 2015
Repairs and improvements	Intended impact
Introduce robust system for get it right first time	Reduce costs to WSHA and make the repair service more user friendly
Review information we obtain and how we obtain it	We want to know when we are not as good as we can be. With this information we can introduce improvements in specific areas
Review and extend repairs by appointment	Make our service better and more flexible to fit with the needs of our tenants
Void contract	Retendered 2014/15. This is to ensure we are getting value for money when repairing void houses
Repair service	Review repair service via tenant scrutiny. This will allow tenants to help us provide a better, more efficient repair service
Additional services	Explore handyman service. This would allow us to act quickly to tenants complaints

## NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY

Our estate management approach is to be responsive to local issues across our wide range of stock and locations. We aim to ensure we have an ethos of continuous improvement in the services we provide by listening to views expressed by tenants at a local level. We have reviewed our service and created a dedicated Neighbourhood Services Team of five Neighbourhood Officers.

We have dedicated budgets to enhance the environment of our estates. Through our Rate Your Estate Strategy, we have set up a Tenant Inspection Group to assess and score the standards in our estates.

We have developed Estate Action Plans to monitor conditions and services in our estates.

#### How did we perform in 2013/14?

**73.6%**  
of tenants are satisfied with the management of neighbourhoods

**83.5%**  
of tenants would recommend WSHA as a landlord

**Outcome:**  
Social landlords working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.

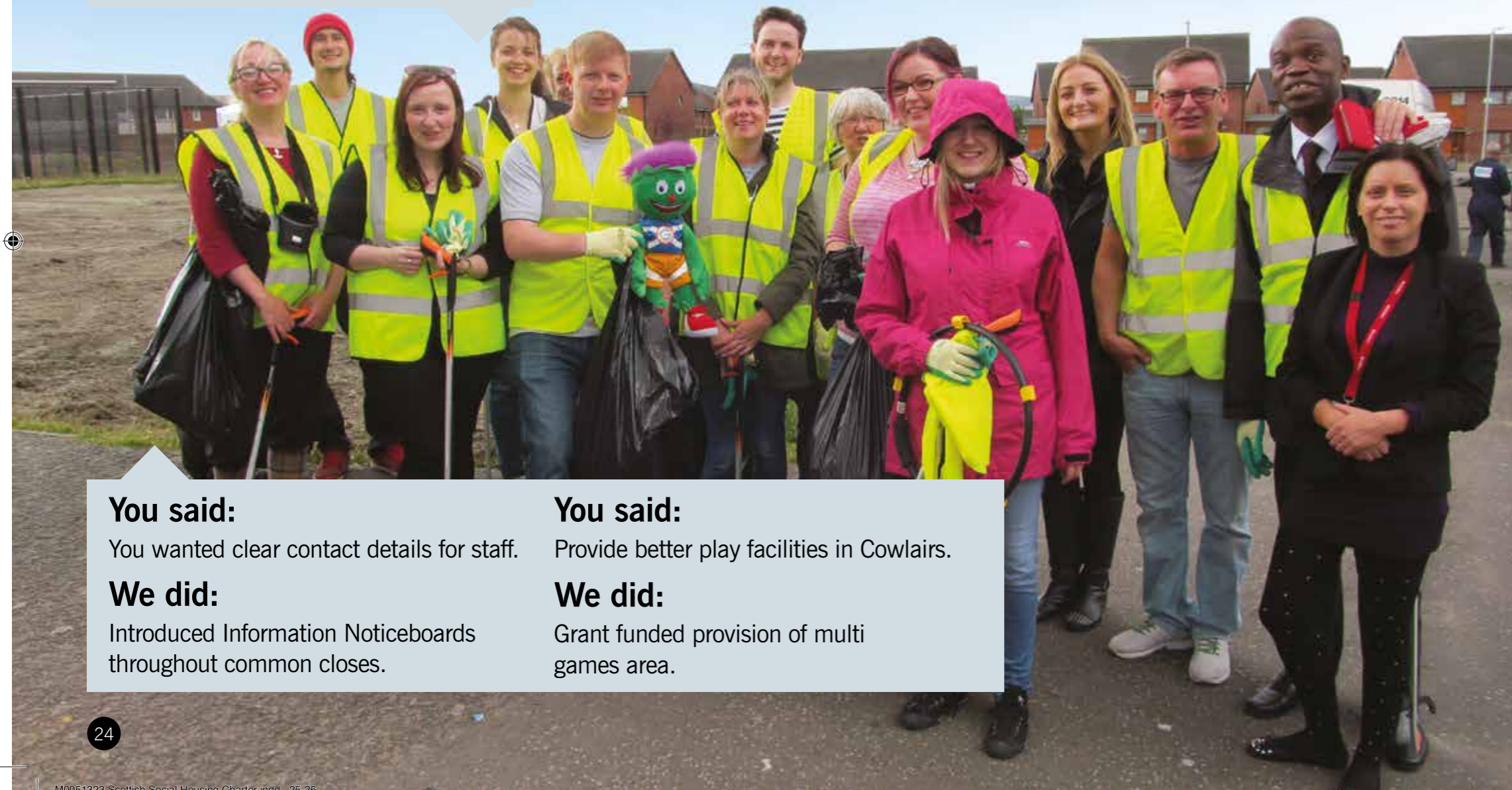


**You said:**

Parking and blocking driveways in Kilmarnock is an issue.

**We did:**

Painted road markings to prevent the problem.



**You said:**

You wanted clear contact details for staff.

**We did:**

Introduced Information Noticeboards throughout common closes.

**You said:**

Provide better play facilities in Cowlairs.

**We did:**

Grant funded provision of multi games area.



**You said:**

Upgrade disused swing park area in Cumbernauld.

**We did:**

Project to remove equipment and install feature flower beds in progress following tenant consultation.

**You said:**

Improve grounds maintenance service.

**We did:**

Closer working with contractors has reduced number of complaints.

**You said:**

Problem with pollution from adjoining works to houses in Bellshill.

**We did:**

Problem stopped when we contacted Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and advised works management.

## Sustainable communities

Amongst other activities in the community, our Sustainable Communities staff have been involved in youth diversionary work in various areas.

<b>Boxing club</b>	Camlachie and Fernhill
<b>Anti-sectarian art workshops</b>	Camlachie, Cowlairs and Fernhill
<b>Street dance club</b>	Camlachie



## Anti social behaviour

- We recorded 236 cases of anti-social behaviour this year
- We use the services of Community Safety Glasgow (CSG) to tackle more difficult anti-social behaviour cases
- We introduced new IT software to record and monitor anti social behaviour



\*Our locally agreed targets are to resolve cases within 28 days of reporting. More complex cases leading to legal action usually take longer.

We have introduced a new IT system called Streetwise to enable us to better record, monitor and action anti-social behaviour complaints. We believe this will allow us to track cases better and to keep complainants better informed of actions and outcomes.

**Our priorities for next year are:**

Neighbourhood and community	Intended action
Streetwise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop full operational system of monitoring anti-social behaviour, producing detailed reports</li> <li>• Improve performance in cases resolved within 28 days</li> </ul>
Trial using Community Safety Glasgow (CSG) outside of Glasgow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess value for money of extending current contract with CSG</li> </ul>
Rate Your Estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target tenant inspection visits to 70% stock by October 2014</li> <li>• Allocate funding to projects identified by tenant inspectors and Neighbourhood Officers</li> </ul>
Grounds maintenance review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure reduction in level of complaints</li> </ul>
Estate Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Estate Action Plans in every estate</li> </ul>



# ACCESS TO HOUSING AND SUPPORT

Accurate information is really important to those looking for a house - 90% of our customers were satisfied with the information provided about their application for housing.



## Our welfare rights service

Help with maximising income and getting the right benefits is crucial - 100% of our tenants surveyed said that the help from our Welfare Rights Team made a big difference in their lives.

Last year our Welfare Rights Team obtained £888,334 for tenants in welfare benefits and housing benefit, including backdated benefit.



## Case Study

A single man, aged 52, suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, had difficulty in engaging with external agencies and asking for help. After his Housing Benefit (HB) stopped he had a high rent arrears balance and did not realise help was available. Therefore, a referral was made from his Housing Officer to the Welfare Rights Team (WRT).

The WRT established a good relationship with the tenant over a number of years, and assisted with additional benefit take-up, due to ill health. Following a visit by the WRT, the tenant's GP was contacted to request a backdated fit note and letter of support to submit with a new Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claim/backdate request.

A new claim was submitted with the same evidence and bank statements for the period where no income or rebates had been in place. The bank was contacted direct for this as the tenant was experiencing a decline in his mental health due to the stress of the situation. Other Creditors were also contacted to

suspend/write off recovery of non-priority debts.

With good working relationships established over many years with the Local Authority and the Department for Work and Pensions, claims and backdates were processed resulting in backdated monies of £1,149 ESA, £1,590.50 HB and £560 Council Tax Discount.

These processes can take a number of weeks to complete so ongoing support and contact with the tenant was very important. Good liaison and referral systems between the Housing Officer and WRT was vital and led to early identification and intervention before this tenant's situation got out of hand. Help is always available.

**If you're worried about how this may affect you, please speak with a member of our Welfare Rights Team on 0141 550 5662**

## Housing options

- People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them
- Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options
- People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness

## Access to housing

- People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed

## Supporting people to remain in their homes

- Tenants get the information they need regarding how to obtain support and remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and other organisations





## How did we perform in 2013/14?

**Must do better:** Last year we took an average of 40 days to let our properties, the average for Scottish housing associations was 36.6 days.



**Doing ok:** Percentage of new tenants still tenants after 12 months was 89%. The average for other similar Scottish housing associations was 88%.

**Doing Well:** 23 tenants abandoned their tenancies last year, this is 0.7% of our stock compared with 0.9% in similar associations.

We have different ways in which people looking for housing can access our stock:

- Direct Application
- Nominations from Women's Aid and Scottish Refugee Council
- Accessing the Common Housing Register in South and North Lanarkshire
- Homeless Referrals from the Council
- Mutual Exchanges



We also have a range of housing to suit various needs:

- Sheltered Housing with low level warden support
- Very Sheltered with intense support
- Amenity Housing for older tenants who wish smaller self contained homes
- Tenement flats with security entries
- Houses and own door flats
- Properties with care providers on site for various types of support needs i.e. Quarriers Support for Young People.

- Wheelchair adapted properties

To help tenants move into their house and start to see it as a home we can offer some items if they are needed. These include:

- Dulux Paint Packs
- Starter Packs of basic essentials such as toaster, kettle, quilts, etc.
- Applications to our sister charity Willowacre Trust for an item required, for example, a cooker for a family with a young child or a fridge for someone with a dietary need

- Assistance from our Welfare Rights Team to complete Local Authority Welfare Fund Applications and for benefit advice or assistance
- Referrals to our Wellbeing Team for advice on Energy Efficiency etc. We also visit all new tenants around six weeks into the tenancy to see if they need any further help and assistance

We work in partnership with other agencies to adapt homes to prevent tenants having to move if their circumstances change. This can include handrails, non-slip flooring, walk in showers, stair lifts etc

## How can we make our service better?

- Improving the information given to customers when applying for houses including appointments to answer questions about the areas where we have houses and the number of empty houses usually available etc.
- Talk about possible support needs with customers before the house is allocated
- Consider visits from our Welfare Rights Team at the very beginning of the tenancy to give advice and assistance



- Reviewing our adaptations policy and procedure to make sure we are carrying out as many adaptations as possible to save people having to move away from their homes



## Did you know?

Last year our Welfare Rights Team obtained £97,522 in extra benefits for 197 of our tenants, an average of £495.03 per tenant. The team also obtained £219,812 in extra Housing Benefit for 244 tenants, an average of £900.86 per tenant.

# VALUE FOR MONEY, RENTS AND SERVICES

## Outcome:

Balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of services, and how far current and prospective tenants and other customers can afford them.

# 76%

of our tenants who were surveyed in 2013 thought their rent was Good Value for Money.



# 78%

was the figure in other similar associations



The landlord services we provide are funded totally by the rents and service charges tenants pay. In 2013/14, each £1 of rent we received was spent as follows.

Staff costs	£0.26
Repairs and maintenance	£0.23
Repaying loans	£0.12
Repaying interest on loans	£0.12
Overheads i.e. depreciation, heat and light etc.	£0.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1.00</b>

Our rent increase was **3.7%**, this was higher than our peer group average of **3.3%**

## Value for money

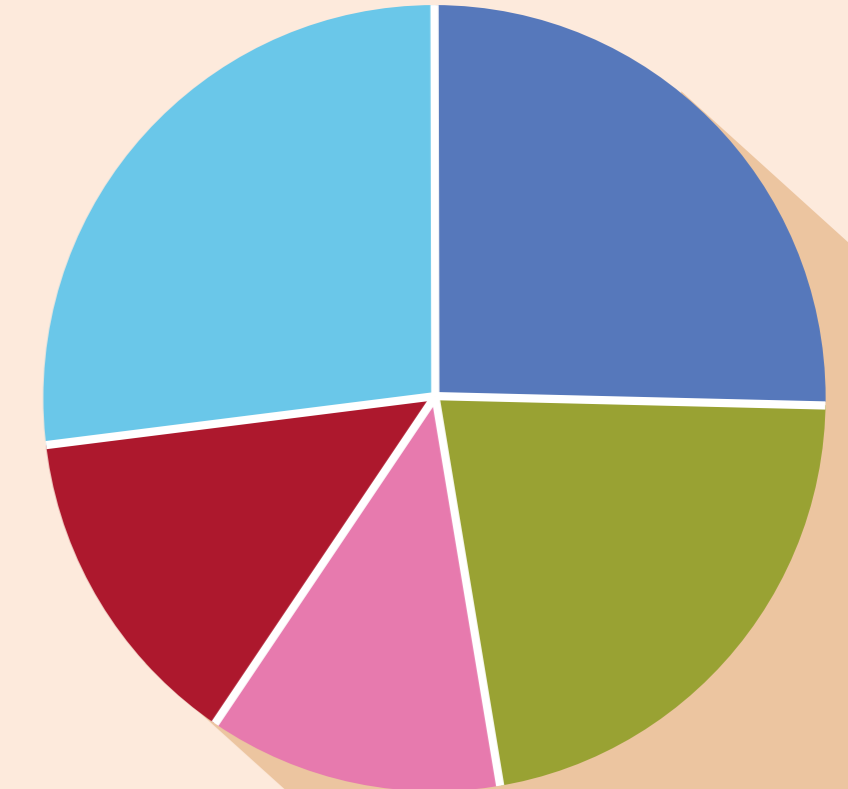
We have 49 houses for each member of staff. The average for the group we benchmark is 46. We had 43 houses for each member of staff in 2011, showing an improvement in value for money.

- 96.9% of rents and service charges due in 2013/14 were collected. Our peer group average was 98.4%.

Landlords have two main areas where income can be lost – empty houses and arrears.

## How is your rent spent?

- Staff costs
- Repairs
- Repaying loans
- Interest on loans
- Overheads



## Empty houses

We lost 0.8% of our rental income on void properties. This is exactly the same as our peer group. On average we spent **£1,407** to repair each empty house. Our peers spent an average of **£996**.

## Arrears

At the end of the year we had **£577,864** of arrears. This is **4.7%** of our rental income.

Our peers had arrears of **5.2%**.

## Factoring

We recovered **73.87%** of factoring charges in 2013/2014.

**74%** of our owners were satisfied with their factoring service. This compares to a peer group average of **62%**.

## Improvements made during the year:

Action	Impact
Transferred tracing former tenant arrears to Gentoo Group	Save £32 per case
Introduced Streetwise software to manage anti-social behaviour cases during the year	Better reporting information
Introduced grant funded financial wellbeing posts to improve services provided to tenants	Provide improved service to tenants
Service charges reviewed to ensure we were fit for introduction of Universal Credit	£40,055
Sale of one vacant property	£45,000
Staffing restructured to ensure greater specialism and accountability	To be fully assessed

## Our Priorities for 2014/15:

Action
Void repair contract to be re-tendered
Prepare for day to day repairs contract to go to tender
Implement Asset Management Strategy
Tenants to scrutinise repairs and voids processes to ensure they provide value for money
Software to be rationalised and supported by Gentoo Group to reduce maintenance costs
Out of hours service to be transferred to Gentoo Group



# THANK YOU FOR READING OUR CHARTER REPORT


We hope you found it useful to understand our activities and performance over the last year. We are committed to delivering excellent housing services, and to achieve this we need to understand what our tenants expect from us.


If you want to discuss any area of our service or performance outlined in this Charter Report, we would like to hear from you. In addition, we would also welcome any comments on the layout, style and content of the Report. It is only by listening



to our tenants that we can provide the services you want.

There are a range of ways to let us know what you think:

 **Community Involvement Officer**  
0844 892 0321

 **40 Barrowfield Drive, Camlachie,**  
**Glasgow, G40 3QH**  
**252 Keppochhill Road,**  
**Springburn,**  
**Glasgow, G21 1HG**

 **info@westscot.co.uk**

 **westscot.co.uk**

 **@WSHAScotland**

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

