

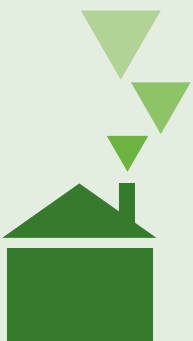
The Highland Council

# HOUSING MATTERS CÙISEAN TAIGHEADAIS

## Annual Customer Report



2016  
2017



# About this Annual Customer Report

## Mun Aithisg Luchd-ceannaich Bhliadhna seo

In April 2012, the Scottish Government introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC). The Charter sets out 16 outcomes and standards that the Scottish Government expect landlords to achieve when delivering services to their tenants and service users.

From 2012 onwards, landlords have been expected to annually self-assess their performance against each of the Charter outcomes and report this to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) in May of each year. This is called the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). A copy of our Annual Return on the Charter can be found online at: [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-and-compare-landlords/highland-council](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-and-compare-landlords/highland-council)

In addition to reporting to the SHR, the Council must also report its performance to its tenants and other service users by 31 October each year. This is our fourth '**Housing Matters**' Annual Customer Report: it tells you how the Housing Service performed from 01 April 2016 until 31 March 2017.




The report doesn't cover all 16 outcomes and standards but it focuses on those areas tenants have told us they are most interested in. The purpose of this report is to provide you with clear, accurate information about areas of our performance.

We hope that you find this year's Annual Customer Report to be meaningful and informative. Our tenant-led Finance and Participation Group have played an important role in setting out what information they feel would be of most interest and benefit to you, and we would like to offer a special thank you to them for their help in preparing this report.



In order to provide some context to the figures, we have provided comparison information with the Scottish average. The Scottish average includes the results for other social landlords such as housing associations.

We have used a traffic light system to show you how the Highland Council compares with other social landlords on the key charter outcomes and standards during 2016/17.

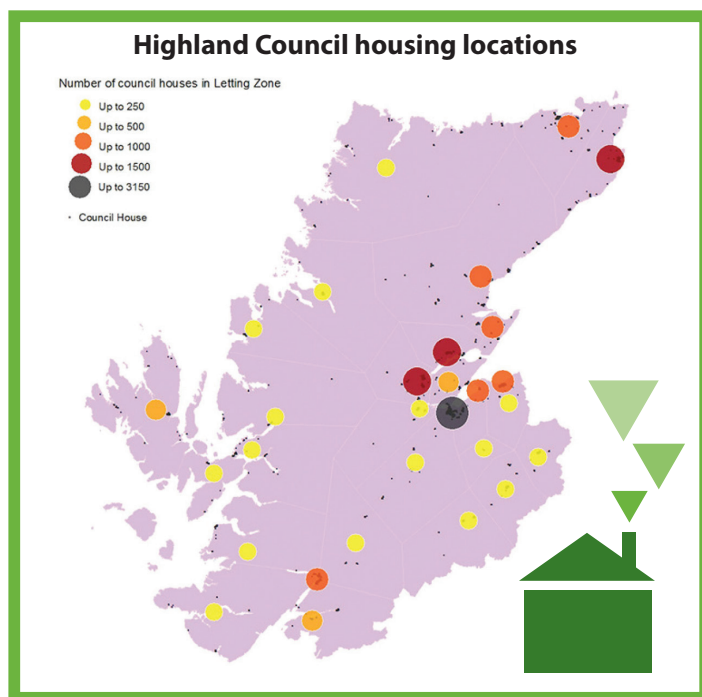
-  Green indicates that we are the same or better than the Scottish average
-  Amber indicates that we are within 5% of the Scottish average
-  Red indicates that we are more than 5% below the Scottish average

**We would really appreciate your feedback** and would like to know what you think about the report. Your views and comments will help us to improve future reports and provide the information you want to know about. You can do this by completing the feedback form on the back page.

# 1

## The Highland Council as Landlord Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd mar Uachdaran

- We provide housing and deliver housing services across a third of the land area of Scotland - including the most remote and sparsely populated parts of the United Kingdom.
- On 31 March 2017, we owned and managed **13,954** council houses in 223 communities in city, town, rural, remote rural and island locations.
- There were **392** staff providing direct housing services at 31 March 2017.
- We provide information about our services in printed and on-line publications, including a tenant newsletter, local news and press releases, a tenancy handbook, a repairs handbook, information leaflets and traditional mailings. Committee meetings are web-cast and accessible from the Council's website at: **www.highland.gov.uk**



During 2016/17 we let **1099** properties. **360** lets (33%) were made to those who were assessed as homeless, **463** lets (42%) went to those on the waiting list and **276** lets (25%) were allocated to the transfer list.

The demand for housing in the Highlands remains high. To help meet demand, the Council plans to deliver **2,500** new affordable homes across the region over the next five years.

### Overall average weekly rent for all apartment sizes in Highland

Apartment size	Number of properties	Weekly rental charge 2014/15 £	Weekly rental charge 2015/16 £	Weekly rental charge 2016/17 £	Scottish average 2016/17 £	How we compare with the Scottish average
bedsit	246	56.62	55.32	<b>59.91</b>	£66.55	●
1 bed	3492	64.96	61.11	<b>66.22</b>	£71.67	●
2 bed	5715	70.85	66.78	<b>72.49</b>	£73.13	●
3 bed	4118	79.67	74.95	<b>81.24</b>	£79.42	●
4 bed +	383	88.87	83.53	<b>90.49</b>	£88.02	●
	<b>13954</b>					

\* Rent figure includes service charges and elements for new supply and includes HRA properties used as temporary accommodation (152 units)

# 2

## Rents and Value for Money Màil agus Luach an Airgid

This annual report covers services provided by the Council as a landlord, paid for from income received into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). To date the Council has actively sought to minimise the impact of budget reductions on housing service delivery by seeking efficiencies through improving processes, developing new ways of working through exploiting technology and reviewing structures. The 'value for money' of services funded by the HRA is a key part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Scrutiny of the HRA is a key priority for tenants. To help ensure that tenants receive the maximum benefit from their rents and ultimately the best standards in service Highland Council tenants have formed a Finance and Participation Group. The Group's remit is to agree how tenants should be consulted on the HRA and have an active voice in decisions affecting the HRA.

### What is the Housing Revenue Account?

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 sets out the requirement for local authorities to maintain a dedicated account in relation to their housing stock. This separate account is called the Housing Revenue Account (the HRA). The Act specifies what a local authority can charge to its HRA and what income can be credited to it. HRA money and assets such as council houses must be used to benefit current tenants or people who may become council tenants in the future.


- Reducing the amount of money tenants owe us in rent arrears is important, as it affects the amount we have to spend on key services such as repairs. This year has been challenging due to the impact of Universal Credit on our tenants, however we have been very proactive in responding to the changes and provide advice and assistance to anyone affected by the change. We continue to support tenants to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) where they are struggling with their housing costs because Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit does not meet all of their needs.
- The amount of rent due to the Highland Council in 2016/17 was **£48,739,936** of which **£47,498,886 (99.3%)** was collected.

### What this report does not cover: The General Fund

The Housing Revenue Account is separate from the Council's General Fund.

The General Fund is the account your Council Tax goes into, as well as the grants given to local authorities by the government. The General Fund pays for things like repairing potholes, gritting roads in winter, street lights, bin collection, social-care services and education.

### Housing Revenue Account - rent collected

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
Rent collected as a % of total rent due	99.8% £45,557,894	98.5% £46,142,267	99.3% £47,498,886	99.6%	



## Housing Revenue Account – how rent was spent

Budget heading and description	2014/15 Annual Budget		2015/16 Annual Budget		2016/17 Annual Budget		Increase/ Decrease from previous year
	% of overall Budget		% of overall Budget		% of overall Budget		(£)
<b>Supervision and Management</b> This heading covers the day to day costs of running the housing service - items such as staff wages, heating and lighting in offices, printing, postage etc. and includes our contribution to the funding of advice services such as CABs in Highland.	14%	£6,884,000	16%	£8,114,000	15%	£7,800,000	- £314,000
<b>Repairs and Maintenance</b> These are the costs of the day to day maintenance of council houses including grounds maintenance and work carried out on empty houses (voids).	34%	£16,834,000	31%	£15,553,000	30%	£15,456,000	-£97,000
<b>Corporate Support</b> This heading covers our service contribution to corporate services we use such as legal services, IT services & business support.	8%	£3,913,000	7%	£3,521,000	7%	£3,556,000	+ £35,000
<b>Loan charges</b> These are the loan charges related to money borrowed to improve or build council housing.	34%	£16,732,000	34%	£17,546,000	37%	£18,979,000	+ £1,433,000
<b>Contribution to the Capital Programme</b> This heading covers money from the HRA which is identified to help fund capital expenditure - for instance to fund the installation of new heating systems, kitchens, bathrooms etc. Councils can decide how much of a contribution can be made from revenue income to fund capital expenditure.	8%	£4,198,000	10%	£4,754,000	9%	£4,828,000	+ £74,000
<b>Void</b> This heading covers the rental loss from houses and other rent voids.	2%	£934,000	2%	£938,000	2%	£858,000	- £80,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£49,495,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£50,426,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£51,477,000</b>	<b>+ £1,051,000</b>

Source: HRA Revenue Expenditure 2014/2015, 2015/2016 & 2016/2017

### The view from a tenant's front door:-

The above summary shows the total HRA income went up by £1,051,000 compared to the previous year but the amount spent on Repairs and Maintenance went down by £97,000. This was not as bad as it might have been since the Supervision and Management costs went down by £314,000. Loan charges went up by a substantial £1,433,000 compared to the year before, which now takes £37 of every £100 compared to £30 of every £100 spent for Repairs and Maintenance. In real terms the trend over the last three years shows the loan charges have increased in actual value year on year and may continue to rise as more houses are built. By comparison the loss from rental arrears and voids was a total of £858,000, which is a reduction of £80,000 and accounts for £2 in every £100".

There will be continued pressure on the HRA as a result of interest payable on loans and capital repayments towards new and historic debt, which are shown in the above table as loan charges.

**By Allan Tubb, Member of the Council's Finance and Participation Group**



## Rent increases

Over the last 6 years, by being as efficient as we can, we have managed to keep our rent increase below the rate of inflation, keeping rents affordable while still delivering a service and improving homes with new heating, kitchens, windows etc.

The weekly rent was increased by **1%** from April 2017.

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
<b>Rent Increase</b>	1%	1.9%	1%	2.3%	

During 2016/17, our overall average weekly rent was **£73.84**. We continue to have the lowest overall average weekly rent in the Highlands.

The Highland Council	Orkney Islands Council	Shetland Islands Council	Pentland Housing Association	Albyn Housing Society	Lochaber Housing Association	Cairn Housing Association	West Highland Housing Association
£73.84	£74.38	£74.84	£77.85	£78.58	£82.84	£83.30	£85.37

It is important that our rents are affordable, but they also have to provide enough income to ensure we can pay for all the things we need such as loan charges, repairs and maintenance to houses, and other costs. Settling rents too low can mean we cannot afford to provide the services to you - setting them too high means it is difficult for people to pay their rent - we need to get the balance right.

## Rent arrears management

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
<b>Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a % of rent due</b>	4.42% £2,035,076	4.76% £2,266,746	4.68% £2,282,604	5.2%	

- The money owed to The Highland Council in rent during 2016/17 was **4.68%** of the rent due.
- This means **£1,539,197** of current rent had not been paid to the HRA, reducing the money we have to provide services. This figure also includes £911,112 owed by former tenants. In 2016/17, we took legal action against **524** tenants which led to **49** tenants being evicted for rent arrears. We only use eviction as a last resort where tenants will not work with us to address their arrears.
- Accounting good practice means that in some cases we have to “write off” rent owed by former tenants - when the person has died, or moved away and we cannot trace them. The value of former tenant arrears written off in 2016/17 was £167,705.

**If you are struggling to pay your rent please contact your Housing Officer. If you are worried about money you can get free, independent help and assistance from the Council’s Welfare Support Team on 0800 090 1004 or from your local Citizen’s Advice Bureau.**

## Universal Credit impacts

Universal Credit was first introduced in Highland in 2013, since then the number of tenants claiming this new benefit has increased year on year.

Unlike the old benefit system where you had to claim each benefit separately, Universal Credit has rolled all six benefits into one single monthly payment. This payment includes money for you and/or your partner, your children, help towards caring responsibilities and childcare costs and money to help you pay your rent. This means that if you are in receipt of Universal Credit you will have to pay your rent to the Council yourself. From 04 October 2017, the Scottish Government introduced changes to how Universal Credit (UC) can be paid for people living in Scotland and making a new 'full service' claim to UC. 'Full Service' is the fully digital UC system where you interact with the DWP through your online journal. The changes allow you to choose the frequency of your payments, monthly or twice monthly, and whether you would like the housing element paid direct to us or not.



Since Universal Credit started in the Highlands we have seen a continuous increase in the level of rent arrears. This is because Universal Credit claimants have to wait at least six weeks for their first payment to come through from DWP. In cases where we receive the housing cost element on behalf of our tenants, the Council can wait up to ten weeks for the first payment. This presents a risk to individual households and the Council's HRA which may affect the services that we are able to deliver.

We are working closely with the DWP and the Council's Corporate Resources Service to help support affected households and reduce the potential impact of increasing rent arrears on the HRA.

If you or someone you know is affected by Universal Credit and you have any questions about Universal Credit you can contact the Council, your local CAB office, local jobcentre or go online at: [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

## Empty Homes - average time taken to re-let properties

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
<b>% rent loss through properties becoming void</b>	0.92% £423,049	1.02% £484,366	<b>0.94%</b> <b>£460,087</b>	0.9%	<span style="color: green;">●</span>
<b>Average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year</b>	42 days	47.1 days	<b>38.8 days</b>	32 days	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>

During 2016/17, **1099 (7.8%)** of our properties became vacant. On average, it took us **38.8 days** to relet our empty properties.

There has been continuous improvement in the average re-let times over the last year although performance remains below our Highland target. This can mainly be attributed to low demand in some areas of Caithness and Sutherland which has a disproportionate impact on overall performance on re-letting empty homes.

Despite these difficulties our performance on void rent loss improved over the last year. At the end of 2016/17 we had just **0.94%** of rent loss from empty properties compared to 1.02% in 2015/16.

## Empty Homes - repair costs

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17
<b>Average cost of repairs to empty homes</b>	£2,772	£2,098	<b>£2,790</b>



The total cost of bringing empty homes up to the Council's Empty Homes Standard in 2016/17 was **£3,468,000**. An increase of £296,556 on the previous year.

## 3

## Quality of Homes Càileachd Dhachaighean

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) was introduced by the Scottish Government in February 2004 to improve the quality of social housing in Scotland. To meet the standard properties must be:

- Compliant with the tolerable standard
- Equipped with modern facilities and services
- Free from serious disrepair
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Energy efficient

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
% of stock meeting the SHQS*	85.1% 11,750 properties	90.83% 12,624 properties	92.17% 12,862 properties	93.6%	
% of stock at or above the appropriate NHER and SAP ratings*	88.0% 11,963 properties	92.36% 12,837 properties	90.68% 12,654 properties	94.9%	

\*SHQS = Scottish Housing Quality Standard / NHER = National Home Energy Rating / SAP - Standard Assessment Procedure rating

At 31 March 2017, **92.17%** (12,862 properties) of the Council's housing stock met the SHQS with the exception of 7.83% (1,092 properties). These properties comprise of either hard to treat or where the cost of the work would not be an effective use of your rent money or where tenants have opted out of having the work done.


	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17
% of homes meeting the EESSH	65.8% 9,140 properties	66.8% 9,322 properties

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) has been replaced with the "Energy Efficiency for Scottish Social Housing" (EESH). The EESH sets out the minimum energy efficiency standard for social housing. It has been developed by the Scottish Government following consultation with social landlords and tenants and will contribute towards the carbon emission reduction targets set by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Landlords must make sure that all social housing meets the new standard by December 2020.


We will continue to improve the quality of our housing stock through our Capital Programme. In 2017/18, we will spend around **£13,023,756** million to carry out repairs, improvements and modernisation to tenants' homes. This level of expenditure is likely to continue in future years so that as much of our housing stock as possible meets the EESH.



## Satisfaction with homes

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
% of existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home	78.8% based on 772 survey responses	69% based on 4,997 survey responses	69.46% based on 5135 survey responses	88.4%	

We send surveys to all our new tenants to gather their views on the standard of their home when moving in. Of the 1099 surveys issued in 2016/17, 195 (18%) were returned. Findings are shown in the table below:

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
% of tenants satisfied with their home when moving in	72% based on 53 survey responses	74.63% based on 205 survey responses	71.79% based on 195 survey responses	90%	

As our tenant, your opinion is vital to us and we want to know how you feel about your home and the services that we provide as your landlord. That's why we will soon be launching satisfaction surveys for all aspects of housing services and inviting you to have your say!







Tenants' views are at the heart of all forms of tenant participation because no one can tell us exactly how good or bad services are for tenants better than those in receipt of the services. Alongside these surveys is our 3 yearly customer satisfaction survey, which is used for strategic planning and informs our annual report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC).



We want to deliver great services that meet and exceed tenant expectations. We strive to be the best - but your involvement is essential to make this possible.

# 4


## Maintenance of Homes Cumail Suas Dhachaighean

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs	9.1 hours	7.9 hours	<b>6.9 hours</b>	4.7 hours	
Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (working days)	7.3 days	7.5 days	<b>6.8 days</b>	7.1 days	
% of repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time	93.8%	95.3%	<b>94.1%</b>	92.4%	
% of repairs appointments kept by trades	93.3%	93.3%	<b>86.7%</b>	95.7%	



The Housing Service has worked hard to improve the housing repairs service which has allowed us to complete repairs more quickly and professionally.

Whilst our performance slipped slightly against some indicators in 2016/17, we still perform well against more measures when compared with other landlords and have plans in place to ensure that our performance continues to improve.

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
% of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs service	84.6% based on 5,180 responses out of 6,166 surveys issued	83.3% based on 6,378 responses out of 7,655 surveys issued	<b>93.51% based on 3,387 responses out of 3,622 surveys issued</b>	91%	

We have been speaking to tenants to find out the areas of the repairs service they are unhappy with. Overall satisfaction has increased significantly, but is still an area Housing Services wish to improve on.



## 5

## Managing our estates, antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

### A' stiùireadh ar n-oighreachdan, giùlan mì-shòisealta, nàbaidhean croiseil agus connspaidean gabhaltais

We want to make sure that our tenants live in neighbourhoods where they feel safe and that are well maintained. Responding to, investigating and managing antisocial behaviour can be complex and resource intensive. A range of partner organisations participate in managing antisocial behaviour on a case by case basis. This includes: Housing Associations, Victim Support Scotland, Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Highland, Highland Council's Environmental Health, Care and Learning Services, Highlife Highland, Alcohol and Drug Partnership and other related third party organisations.

#### Antisocial behaviour cases resolved within target timescales in 2016/17

	Highland 2014/15	Highland 2015/16	Highland 2016/17	Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
% Antisocial behaviour cases resolved within target timescales in 2016/17	76.3% 1,377 out of 1,804	80.9% 1,698 out of 2,097	84.58% 1,234 out of 1,459	87.20%	

By resolved we mean cases where:

- we have taken appropriate measures, as set out in the policy and procedures, to address the cause of the antisocial behaviour complaint and advised the complainant of the outcome; or
- we do not have the authority or powers to resolve the case and have provided a full explanation of our position to the complainant.

Antisocial behaviour is categorised to help manage and respond to complaints.

Category	Definition	Timescale
A	Minor breach of tenancy conditions, disputes solely between two neighbours.	Investigate and update complainant within 10 working days
B	Antisocial behaviour, where the behaviour is of a serious and persistent nature.	Initial investigation and assess. Contact complainant within 5 working days to advise of assessment
C	Severe antisocial behaviour, where the Police are involved.	Visit/interview complainant and request information from the Police within 2 days

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Category A	1,631	1,893	1293
Category B	153	153	107
Category C	32	51	59

The number of antisocial complaints reported for each category over the past three years is set out in the table (see left):

If you are experiencing any problems please contact us immediately on **01349 886602**.

**If you wish to report any criminal activity, telephone Police Scotland on 101 or if you want to pass on information about crime anonymously telephone Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.**

# 6

## Complaints & Comments Gearanan & Beachdan

All tenants have the right to complain if they are not satisfied with the level of service that we provide. We take complaints very seriously and have a comprehensive complaints handling policy that is in line with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) model complaint handling procedure.

Complaints give us valuable information that we use to improve customer satisfaction and make changes to our service. Our complaints handling policy allows us to address the problem and may help prevent the issue from happening again. You can find out more about complaints including how to complain from the Council's Complaints leaflet - contact us for a copy or go to the Council's website at : [www.highland.gov.uk/info/670/consultations\\_complaints\\_and\\_compliments/368/make\\_a\\_complaint](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/670/consultations_complaints_and_compliments/368/make_a_complaint).

All complaints are recorded through our corporate complaints system. To monitor complaints we divide them into:

- 1st stage complaints which are straight forward and need little or no investigation
- 2nd stage complaints which are more complex or more serious and need further investigation



The percentage of 1st and 2nd stage complaints responded to in the last three years within the SPSO guidelines was as follows:

	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17			Scottish average 2016/17	How we compare with the Scottish average
	No. complaints received	No. complaints Upheld	No. complaints received	No. complaints Upheld	No. complaints received	No. complaints Upheld	% responded to within SPSO timescales		
Stage 1	327	214 (64.9%)	418	184 (44%)	362	83 (25.54%)	325 (89.78%)	85.4%	●
Stage 2	30	13 (39.4%)	20	9 (45%)	27	7 (25.93%)	27 (100%)	82.9%	●





## Improving Your Estates

To ensure your estates are kept clean and in good condition we would like tenants to participate in 'Rate Your Estate' walkabouts and help us prioritise the type of improvements you would like to see in the neighbourhoods that you live in.

We will soon be consulting tenants to seek your views on:

- how often do you think 'Rate Your Estate' walkabouts should be carried out?
- what estate improvements would make most difference to you? and
- would you be interested in working as part of a group to help prioritise improvements and make sure these are reflected within the Council's housing investment strategy?

We have set an annual budget of £601,188 for 2017/18 to improve your housing estates. It is important that we hear your ideas.

If you are interested in joining a 'Rate Your Estate' working group or if you would like more information please contact Amanda Gregory, Principal Tenant & Customer Engagement Officer.

 01463 252968

 [amanda.gregory@highland.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.gregory@highland.gov.uk)

 **Community Services - Housing Team**  
The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness  
IV3 5NX







## Getting Involved A' Gabhail Com-pàirt

Tenant Participation first started in the Highlands in the 1990's, however it was the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 that gave tenants the rights to work more closely with their landlord towards the delivery of better services.

We believe that tenant involvement should be positive and active. Consulting and involving tenants in the services we provide is at the centre of what we do. To be successful, tenant involvement relies on effective communication between tenants and the Council and their involvement in the decision making process. Tenants have played a key role in shaping and monitoring housing services for a number of years and we acknowledge the importance of tenant engagement and consultation to ensure continuous improvement and tenant satisfaction.

Our 2016 tenant satisfaction survey revealed that only 46.01% of our tenants were satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in our decision making processes. To address your concerns, we are currently reviewing our tenant participation structure to develop a model that best suits the needs of our tenants, a model that offers involvement opportunities that are not only convenient to tenants but also offer a personal as well as a collective say. We want to look beyond government expectations and provide greater choice, more incentives, training and development opportunities and increased flexibility in our approach to involving tenants.



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### Formal opportunities for involvement

- **Communications working group**

The Tenant Communications working group meet on a regular basis with the Tenant Participation Team to plan, design and contribute to the quarterly edition of the tenant newsletter 'Housing Matters'. The group also has a direct input into the review and introduction of all Housing Services literature and publications.

- **Scrutiny Panel**

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is involved in scrutinising the delivery of housing services. The Panel monitor the quality of service delivery against defined standards and can undertake on-site inspections. They are empowered to call managers to account if services do not meet the required standard and their feedback forms part of overall performance monitoring. The Panel is currently scrutinising the Housing Service complaints handling process.

- **Finance and Participation Group**

The Finance and Participation Group is another tenant-led group, it's remit is to focus primarily on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The group act as a 'critical friend' by analysing HRA expenditure, questioning and challenging the Council as part of a constructive and structured approach to continuous improvement.

## Informal opportunities for involvement

- by taking part in surveys either by email, online, text, phone or post
- customer panels
- community events/open days
- estate walkabouts
- focus groups
- by becoming a Tenant Inspector
- by becoming a Mystery Shopper
- training and development opportunities
- by becoming a Community Voice



For tenants who do not have time or are unable to attend meetings, there are still ways of working with us to **make your voice heard**.

Our List of Interested Tenants is a database of Council tenants who are happy to give their views but are unable to get involved in meetings or activities. If you would like to find out more about Tenant Participation or our List of Interested Tenants please contact your Tenant Participation Officer. Contact details can be found below.



### Contact your Tenant Participation Officer for more information on how to get involved:

If you live in:	Contact	Contact details
Caithness, Sutherland, Easter Ross	Lorna Simpson	07774 337 689 lorna.simpson@highland.gov.uk
Inverness	Wilma West	07990 565 755 wilma.west@highland.gov.uk
Lochaber, Badenoch & Strathspey, Nairn	Kate MacLennan	07557 744 420 kate.maclennan@highland.gov.uk
Ross & Cromarty, Skye & Lochalsh	Mandy Macleman	07557 744 413 mandy.macleman@highland.gov.uk

# Your Feedback

## Thoir dhuinn do bheachd...

Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Customer Report 2016/17. We would really appreciate your feedback and would like to know what you think about the report. Your views and comments will help us to improve future reports and provide the information you want to know about.

You can return the form to us using the Freepost envelope provided or by handing it into your local Service Point.

**Was this report relevant to you?** Relevant to me  Could be improved  Not at all relevant

**Was the report detailed enough?** Too detailed  Just right  Not enough detail

**Was the report easy to understand?** Too simple  Easy to understand  Too difficult

**What did you think about the design of the report?** Very good  Good  Poor

5) If you have any comments, questions or would like to offer feedback then please list them below:

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.....

### Your details

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode..... Phone .....

Email.....

Please tick this box if you would like us to add you to our list of interested tenants from whom we gather opinions on housing related matters.

**Thank you for giving us you feedback.**



Complete the survey above and return it to:  
**Community Services Housing Team**  
**Freeport RTSB-EBHT-JZTJ**  
**The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road**  
**INVERNESS IV3 5NX**