

Agenda Item	9
Report No	BSAC/04/21

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **Badenoch and Strathspey Committee**

Date: **9 February 2021**

Report Title: **Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020**

Report By: **Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property**

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information on how the Housing Service performed in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 31 December 2020.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020.

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. Information on other performance indicators for housing management is presented in tabular format at **Appendix 1**.
- 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
2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 4.8 hours

EME	No of Houses	2019/20				2020/21		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Badenoch and Strathspey	547	5.8	5.3	5.6	5.0	7.6	8.1	8.7
Highland	14296	4.7	4.8	5.3	6.0	4.5	5.7	6.9

- 5.4 Performance in Badenoch & Strathspey for Quarter 3 is within the 14 hour target. There is a slight increase in time taken to complete emergency repairs when compared with previous quarters, this is due to Covid and the additional measures Contractors need to put in place to ensure safe working practices.
- 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
2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 6.6 days

NON-EME	No of Houses	2019/20				2020/21		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Badenoch and Strathspey	547	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.1	3.3	5.3	6.6
Highland	14296	5.1	4.8	5.0	5.3	7.9	12.4	10.8

5.7 During Quarter 3 non-emergency repairs performance was impacted by COVID-19 lockdown and Covid restrictions. The Service priority was to deliver emergency and high priority repairs only, this resulted in a backlog of routine repairs.

5.8 At the time of writing this report we are in a further lockdown. The Service priority is to deliver emergency and high priority repairs only, non-emergency repairs are being logged and will be dealt with as soon as lockdown restrictions ease.

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 back two years and highlighting the same quarter in previous year for comparison.

6.2 **Table 3: Average re-let time (days) Target 35 days**
2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 40.9 days

Avg relet time	No of Houses	No of relets	2019/20				2020/21		
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Badenoch and Strathspey	547	19	30.29	23.07	22.81	32.30	40.67	41.13	39.42
Highland	14296	588	36.00	34.60	32.89	35.77	45.86	53.24	46.01

6.3 Re-let performance in Badenoch and Strathspey is over the 35 day target. There has been improvement since Quarter 2 however Covid restrictions and the additional procedures the Service must apply to ensure safe working practices does mean it takes longer to re-let properties.

6.4 As per Scottish Government guidance the Service is continuing to allocate Council housing during the current lockdown.

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 same quarter in the previous two years.

Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears

Rent arrears	No of Houses	2019/20				2020/21		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Badenoch and Strathspey	547	36,068	44,057	34,808	50,560	53,715	55,148	49,129

7.3 Rent arrears have decreased in Quarter 3 2020/21. There is normally a reduction in rent arrears in Quarter 3, this is due to the two rent free weeks in December.

7.4 We are delivering a full service in relation to rent arrears across Badenoch and Strathspey but without home visits. The Badenoch and Strathspey team continue to have a focus on rent arrears, contacting all tenants in arrears confirming repayments arrangements and sign posting to specialist advice where this is needed.

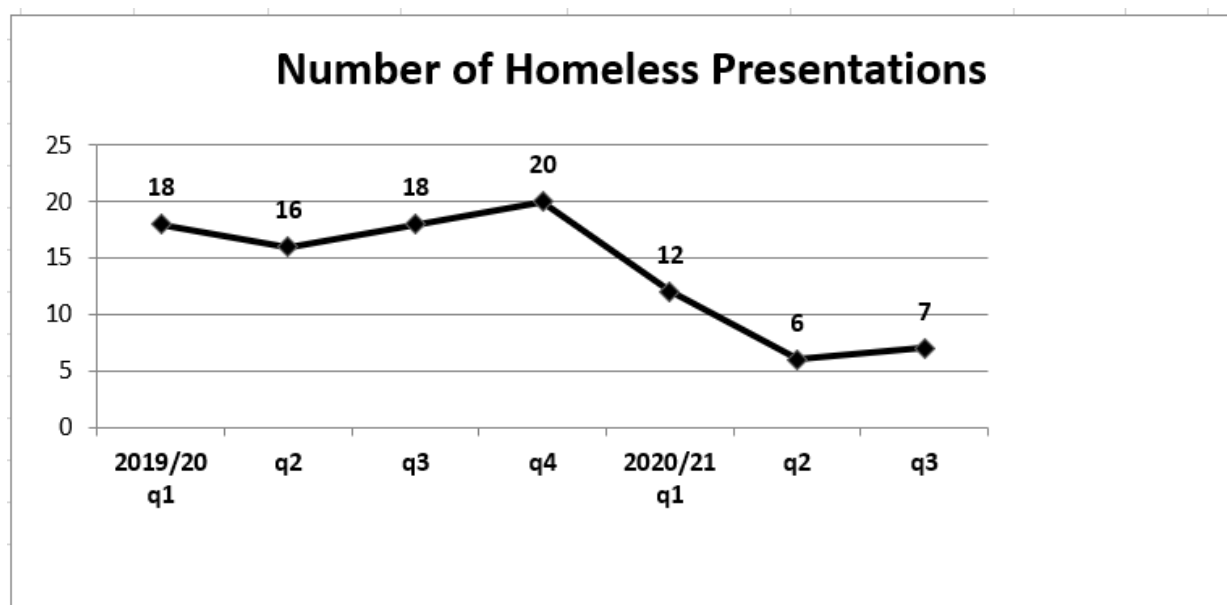
8 Homelessness

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 number of homeless presentations received.

8.3 There were 227 presentations across Highland at the end of Q3 2020. 7 presentations were in Badenoch and Strathspey.

8.4 **Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



8.5 There has been a reduction in homeless presentation compared with the same quarter in the previous year. The current Scottish Government restrictions on eviction action across all housing tenures has had an impact on the number of homeless presentations. New housing development in Badenoch and Strathspey for both the Council and Albyn Housing has also assisted with allocations to some applicants who, under other circumstances may have presented to the Council as homeless.

9 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme Update

- 9.1 All capital works were stopped on site during the national lockdown period in Spring and early Summer 2020. From 20 July 2020, capital works re-started on several projects. This focused initially on external works and completing outstanding works rather than initiating new works. Owing to updated working practices in line with Government guidance, works were being delivered far more slowly than in normal circumstances. Estimated outturns for the present year overall HRA capital programme were reported to Housing and Property Committee in December 2020.
- 9.2 In light of recent further restrictions and in line with Government guidance, works are again suspended until such time as guidance allows for a restart. Tenant liaison officers are making contact with tenants to communicate the further delays and address any concerns and will be contacted again in advance of any works re-commencing.
- 9.3 Following approval of the 2021-22 Badenoch & Strathspey HRA capital programme at local area committee on 10 November 2020, projects are being initiated in order to progress as soon as possible early in the next financial year and once restrictions allow. A specific update on progress against the current year capital programme and 2021-22 programme has been provided through recent ward briefing.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property

Date: 14 January 2021

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

APPENDIX 1

SPI 20/21	20/21	Scottish Average	Target	Qtr3	2020/21		2019/20
					Qtr2	Qtr1	Qtr4
Reactive repairs carried out first time - B&S	GREEN	92.23	92.00	93.09	94.87	94.55	98.58
Rent collected as % of rent due - B&S	GREEN	99.38	99.00	100.58	99.80	102.16	99.21
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - B&S	GREEN	5.41	5.00	3.09	3.17	3.15	3.46
% rent loss through voids - B&S	GREEN	0.85	1.00	0.51	0.40	0.16	0.52
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - B&S	RED	88.66	90.00	82.93	86.11	84.09	86.84
Tenancy offers refused - B&S	GREEN	35.86	38.00	23.81	37.50	0.00	32.00
% of lettable houses becoming vacant B&S	GREEN	8.56	8.90	7.50	8.12	9.59	9.78
% households requiring temporary emergency accommodation who receive an offer B&S	GREEN		100	100	100	100	100
Average time in temporary emergency accommodation B&S				48.34	42.29	44.40	42.54