

Agenda Item	6
Report No	CC/14/25

The Highland Council

Committee: Caithness

Date: 28 April 2025

Report Title: Housing Management Performance Report – 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

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 2025.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to **note** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.

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 **Risk** - Risk is managed through regular review and reporting to allow corrective action to be taken if necessary.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

3.5 **Gaelic** - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4 Impacts

4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.

4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.

4.3 This is a monitoring and update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Background

5.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has set out the performance indicators that it will use in its scrutiny of landlords.

5.2 This report provides key performance information based on the reporting framework recommended by the SHR.

5.3 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

5.4 In accordance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter guidance, the Rent Arrears, Anti-social Behaviour and Allocations figures are cumulative (unless otherwise stated), while the Homeless Presentation figures are given for each separate quarter.

5.5 Scottish Housing Network (SHN) benchmark information, derived from the performance of all Scottish Landlords, has also been provided where available.

6 Rent Arrears

6.1 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.

6.2 **Table 1 – Current Rent Arrears**

Rent arrears	No of Houses	2023/24	2024/25			
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	839	£84,712	£83,048	£110,742	£105,590	£105,620
Wick and East Caithness	1205	£131,707	£128,885	£165,881	£147,680	£151,110

6.3 Rent Arrears in quarter 4 have remained at a stable level when compared to quarter 3, however arrears remain higher across both Caithness wards when compared to the same period in the previous year.

6.4 The table below shows gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due. This percentage includes arrears that are current, former or have been written off.

6.5

**Table 2 – Gross rent arrears as a percentage of annual rent due
Target 6.9%
2023/24 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 6.7%**

Gross Rent Arrears %	2023/24	2024/25			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	3.97%	3.34%	4.18%	4.06%	4.11%
Wick and East Caithness	4.86%	4.16%	4.99%	4.81%	4.84%
Highland	7.67%	6.94%	7.43%	7.04%	6.82%

6.6 Gross rent arrears as a percentage of annual rent due across both Caithness wards has increased slightly since the previous quarter, however remains significantly below the Highland-wide figure of 6.82%.

6.7 The table below shows the current arrears in Caithness split into arrears level bands. The information provided shows the total number of cases in each band and the total value of these cases.

6.8

Table 3 – Value of current rent arrears in bands

	Current Arrears			
	< £500	> £500	> £,1000	> £2,500
		< £1,000	< £,2500	
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	212	45	26	0
Wick and East Caithness	354	59	32	1
Total value of cases	£94,872	£74,302	£84,276	£3,279

6.9 The table below provides information on formal actions taken in relation to rent arrears across Caithness.

6.10

Table 4 – Rent actions (not cumulative)

	2023/24	2024/25			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Notice of Proceedings issued	10	32	42	29	12
Court Actions Initiated	4	1	9	5	4
Evictions Completed	1	0	1	0	0

6.11 The local Housing team remain focussed on intervening early and offering support and advice to prevent arrears escalating. Table 3 at 6.8 demonstrates that the local team is maintaining the majority of cases below the higher threshold of £2500 with only 1 case above this level. Table 4 at 6.10 demonstrates that the level of cases requiring court action are low, and only a single eviction was carried out in 2024/25.

7 Anti-social Behaviour

7.1 The Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator includes key information on our performance throughout the year in relation to resolving anti-social behaviour complaints. This includes the number of cases of antisocial behaviour reported within the year, and the number of cases resolved within the year.

7.2 The table below shows the number of cases reported and the percentage of cases that were resolved within the key indicator timescales.

7.3 **Table 5 – ASB cases reported/resolved**
Target 88%
2023/24 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 94.3%

	2023/24	2024/25			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of ASB cases reported	74	7	12	14	22
Percentage of cases resolved	93%	43%	25%	29%	77%
Highland percentage resolved	79%	26%	36%	47%	81%

7.4 Tackling antisocial behaviour is a key priority for the local housing team. The management of cases is often complex, involving other services and agencies. Cases that remain open continue to be actively managed by the team.

8 Homelessness

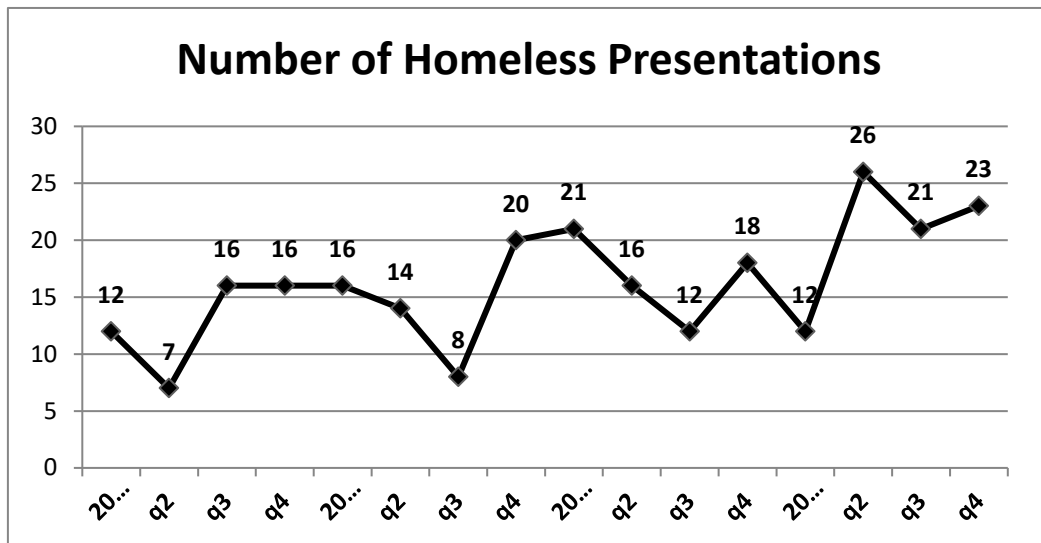
8.1 Performance information on homelessness is not collected as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter return, however a number of indicators have been agreed for reporting to Local Committees.

8.2 Table 6 shows the number of homeless presentations received across both Caithness Wards.

8.3 There were 299 presentations across Highland at the end of quarter 4. 23 of these were in Caithness.

8.4

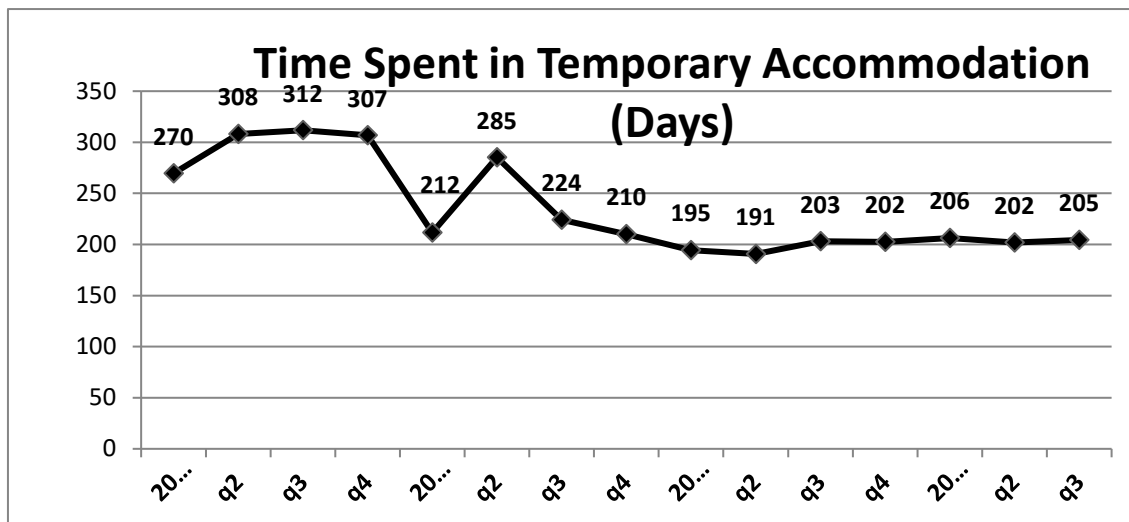
Table 6 - Homeless Presentations



8.5 Financial pressure on households has been a contributing factor to an increase in homeless presentations following a relationship breakdown. The local housing team are also seeing an increase in presentations following private landlords serving tenants with a notice to quit.

8.6 Table 7 below shows the average time spent in temporary accommodation. This is a Highland wide figure. It is not possible to disaggregate this figure further.

**Table 7 – Time Spent in Temporary Accommodation
2022/23 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 233 Days**



8.8 The reduction in the length of time spent in temporary accommodation has been achieved by a strong focus on delivering permanent outcomes for homeless households across Highland.

8.9 Table 8 shows the total number of homeless applications currently open with the Caithness housing team, and the size of property required by these homeless households.

8.10

Table 8 – Homeless Households/Property Types

Caithness Homeless	Size of Property Required				
	Total	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed +
Current number of homeless households	9	6	2	1	0
Highland-wide	842	626	131	52	33

9 Allocations

9.1 Table 9 below provides a breakdown of all lets carried out, split between homeless applicants, non-homeless applicants and transfer applicants.

9.2 **Table 9 – Number of Allocations Completed**

Number of Allocations Completed	2023/24	2024/25			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
No. of Lets to Transfer List Applicants	61	10	23	31	36
No. of Lets to Non-Homeless Housing List Applicants	137	28	51	76	92
No. of Lets to Homeless Applicants	46	7	21	35	46
Total	244	45	95	142	174

9.3 The proportion of lets to homeless applicants in Caithness is generally much lower than other areas of Highland due to the ability to achieve outcomes for applicants without the need for a homeless application.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive – Place

Date: 28 April 2025

Author: Jake Mitchell, Housing Manager (North)

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

Appendices: None