

Agenda Item	8
Report No	CC/06/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Caithness

Date: 19 January 2026

Report Title: Housing Repairs and Capital Report – 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

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 2025.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to **note** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2025 – 31 December 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 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 Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 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 Repairs, figures are cumulative.
- 5.5 Scottish Housing Network (SHN) benchmark information, derived from the performance of all Scottish Landlords, has also been provided where available.

6 Repairs

- 6.1 The key indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete Emergency repairs and non-emergency repairs.
- 6.2 The average length of time taken to complete Emergency repairs is calculated in hours.
- 6.4 The Caithness Building Maintenance team continue to perform well with emergency repairs well within the target of 12 hours and better than the Highland Average of 4.2 hours in both wards. Emergency repairs remain a priority for the service.
- 6.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days.

6.6 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**
Target 8.9 days
2024/25 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 9.1 days

NON-EME	No of Houses	2024/25		2025/26		
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	840	6.4	6.3	5.6	6.2	6.7
Wick and East Caithness	1,205	6.1	6.2	6.7	6.7	7.5
Highland	15,351	7.1	7.7	6.5	6.8	7.3

6.7 The Caithness Building Maintenance team continue to perform strongly in regard to non-emergency repairs and remain within the performance target of 8.9 days in both wards.

6.8 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.

7 Void Management

7.1 The chart below provides information on the average re-let time highlighting the same quarter in previous years for comparison.

7.2 **Table 3: Average re-let time (days) Target 55.6 days**
2024/25 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 60.6 days

Avg relet time, ARC	No of Houses	No of relets	2024/25		2025/26		
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	840	62	40.0	42.2	53.8	54.2	50.6
Wick and East Caithness	1205	80	31.1	32.2	44.1	41.3	37.8
Highland	15351	915	54.6	58.2	47.5	46.1	44.5

7.3 Caithness re-let times have improved on Quarters 1 and 2 but continue to be affected by hard to let properties. The implemented Void-Plus Policy is designed to help create sustainable tenancies in parts of Caithness where there has been difficulty in re-letting void Council housing. It involves an enhanced decorative standard at the void stage to encourage applicants to bid for these houses as part of the Caithness Choice-Based Letting process.

8 Capital Program

8.1 The 2022–2027 Capital Investment Programme continues to support key areas of planned investment; Capital Investment Programmes provides for:-

- Replacement of key building components at end of lifecycle
- Heating system upgrades and energy efficiency improvements
- Delivery of aids and adaptations
- Support for local building maintenance teams to address component failures.

The programme balances long-term asset management priorities with responsive and needs-led delivery.

8.2 Current Programme Delivery

The Caithness capital programme continues to progress across multiple work streams. A summary of key projects and their current status is provided in the table below:

Programme Code	Work Type	Status
CSH24000	Windows and Doors	Complete
CSH24021	Heating	Ongoing
CSH25001	Roofing	Awaiting Re-tender
CSH25003	Rewires	Ongoing
CSH25005	Heating	Ongoing
CSH25010	Heating	Ongoing

Windows and Doors (CSH24000)

The windows and doors replacement contract for Wick and Thurso has been successfully completed. A review will follow to identify any remaining requirements and inform future resource allocation.

Heating and Energy Efficiency

Heating programmes remain a major focus, with three active contracts continuing through the financial year. Delivery is aligned with the approved budget and prioritises properties with the lowest EPC ratings and oldest heating systems. External funding via D-C projects has enabled installation of fully funded heating systems, solar PV, and insulation measures. Properties originally reserved for the unsuccessful 2025 Net Zero bid have been absorbed into these programmes to maintain continuity.

Roofing

A major roofing project initiated in early 2025 returned higher-than-expected tender costs. Officers are reviewing specifications and design, with re-tendering scheduled for early 2026.

External Fabric

A review of external fabric requirements is ongoing. A programme update will be provided once assessments and prioritisation have been completed.

8.3 D-C Programme

The Housing Investment Team has worked closely with the Climate Change and Energy Team throughout 2025/26 to identify and access external funding opportunities aimed at securing fully funded measures across the Highlands. This collaborative approach has been central to the success of the programme to date.

Through ECO4 funding, **84 Caithness properties** have received fully funded energy efficiency measures.

This external investment has helped offset pressures on the local planned capital budget. However, the programme is currently on pause while we await a review of the impact of the government's decision to remove support for ECO funding. Despite this, we remain committed to working with contractors and partners to identify alternative funding streams and continue delivering improvements wherever possible.

8.4 One-off Capital Programme

Local teams continue to deliver one-off capital works in response to component failures. High demand has impacted several budget lines. To manage pressures:

- Planned programme budgets for Caithness have been reduced, reprofiling budgets to offset overspends in key areas.
- Contingency budget has been utilised.
- Authorisations for replacement are restricted to **failure-only** cases.

The most affected budgets are Energy Efficiency, Kitchens, and Bathrooms. Monitoring continues to ensure essential works are prioritised.

8.5 Environmental Capital Projects

Local teams are reviewing Environmental Capital allocations. Ward business meetings have highlighted underspend opportunities, with potential to reprofile funds to support essential component replacement. This would help alleviate local pressures caused by reactive failures. At present there are two projects in the area being delivered, demolition of Garages and the creation of car parking and the rebuilding of steps and handrails at one of our sheltered developments.

8.6 Please see **Appendix 1** which demonstrates what has been delivered to date.

Please note that **Appendix 1** does not include projects which are currently active.

Please note that a financial breakdown is not available in this report due to the timing of the report deadlines.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 8 January 2026

Author: Lachie MacDonald, Repairs Delivery Manager
Graeme Ralph, Repairs Manager

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

Appendices: Appendix 1 – 2025 Delivery Output

ELEMENT	BUDGET	COUNT
Wall Insulation	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	33
New Roof Installation	FREE FROM SERIOUS DISREPAIR	1
Front Door Installation	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	47
Back Door Installation	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	45
Window Installation	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	45
Bathroom Replacement	MAJOR COMPONENT	21
Decor Kitchen Installation	MAJOR COMPONENT	22
Decor Heating Installation	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	112
Solar Panel Installation Date	ENERGY EFFICIENCY	112
Full Re-Wiring	MAJOR COMPONENT	3