



**Scottish Housing
Regulator**

**Gypsy/Travellers' sites in
Scotland: An update**

March 2018



Introduction





This report gives an update on our work to safeguard and promote the interests of Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland. It gives information about Gypsy/Travellers' sites across Scotland, the rents Gypsy/Travellers pay and how satisfied they are with the services they receive. It also highlights what we expect from landlords and sets out the findings of visits by our tenant advisors to a number of sites across Scotland.

About Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland

We regulate around 200 social housing landlords in Scotland. As part of our role we safeguard and promote the interests of:



Rents, sites and pitches, and service user satisfaction

Landlords 	Sites & pitches 		Average weekly pitch rents 		Service user satisfaction (%) 	
	Sites	Pitches	2015/16	2016/17 (Scottish average £67.08)	2015/16	2016/17 (Scottish average 79.38%)
Aberdeen City Council	1	17	75.69	75.69	93.75	94.12
Aberdeenshire Council	1	20	76.19	79.05	100.00	100.00
Angus Council	1	18	51.23	52.72	87.50	100.00
Argyll Community HA	3	29	45.52	46.52	83.33	91.67
City of Edinburgh Council	1	20	77.27	77.27	38.46	80.00
Clackmannanshire Council	1	16	85.00	85.00	28.57	80.00
Dumfries & Galloway Council	2	30	65.20	65.20	53.85	75.00
Dundee City Council	1	20	67.74	62.53	100.00	100.00
East Lothian Council	1	8	41.89	43.98	71.43	71.43
Midlothian Council	1	8	41.89	43.98	71.43	71.43
Falkirk Council	1	15	73.93	76.59	100.00	66.67
Fife Council	3	50	55.73	58.71	70.59	29.17
Highland Council	4	49	73.75	76.09	70.83	70.83
North Ayrshire Council	1	16	80.09	81.29	83.33	83.33
Perth & Kinross Council	2	26	90.36	89.87	58.82	58.82
Scottish Borders Council	1	10	45.00	45.00	45.00	No return
South Ayrshire Council	1	4	79.69	79.69	0.00	50.00
South Lanarkshire Council	2	28	57.00	58.71	100.00	100.00
Stirling Council	1	18	80.23	81.04	100.00	100.00
West Dunbartonshire Council	1	20	65.99	68.63	44.44	85.71

Source: Social landlords' Charter data from their Annual Return on the Charter

Our thematic inquiry

In November 2015 we published our thematic inquiry report called Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland which highlighted the need for social landlords to improve services to Gypsy/Travellers.

Following the publication of our thematic we expected site providers to:

- apply all relevant Charter standards and outcomes;
- understand the particular needs of Gypsy/Travellers in order to deliver services which respond to those needs;
- assess the feasibility of making sites and buildings barrier free, wherever possible;
- regularly gather information on resident satisfaction and report on this to residents;
- regularly provide information to site residents about their complaints policy and process;
- routinely gather information, feedback and complaints to improve the standard of sites and services;
- engage with site residents and identify appropriate methods for regular communication and opportunities for participating in their landlord's decision making process;
- publish target timescales for carrying out responsive repairs;
- routinely measure, report on and publish information on their repairs performance;
- work with residents or their representatives to develop standards and publish them;
- routinely measure, report and publish their performance against their Gypsy/Travellers' service standards;
- ensure a named contact is provided to people who use their sites;
- ensure that a structured rent setting policy is in place for site pitches which takes account of what potential residents will be able to afford;
- provide site residents, as with social housing tenants, opportunities to provide comment and feedback prior to any decision around annual pitch rent increases;
- consider value for money priorities for site residents and provide information about how they achieve value for money including comparable information about local social rented housing costs; and
- adopt an asset management approach in relation to their Gypsy/Travellers' site(s).



Outcome of tenant advisor work

In November 2016, we developed a poster to raise awareness of the standards and outcomes landlords are expected to deliver against the Scottish Social Housing Charter. We required all landlords to prominently display the poster at Gypsy/Travellers' sites.

In 2017, our tenant advisors visited Gypsy/Travellers' sites across Scotland. Part of their work was to test whether our poster was prominently displayed.

Summary outcome of our tenant advisor visits to Gypsy/Travellers' sites:

Our tenant advisors visited **12/29** Gypsy/Travellers' sites across Scotland.



The poster was prominently displayed in **6** of the **12** sites.



The poster was less prominently displayed in **2** sites and was not displayed at all in **4** sites.



Our tenant advisors were unable to access the site manager in **8** of the **12** sites.



Our tenant advisors were told by residents at **4** sites that they had not seen a site manager for months or had seen them only occasionally.

Our tenant advisors were told by **3** of the **4** available site managers that there were plans for site improvements or improvements were already under way.



Our information poster for Gypsy/Travellers

Under the Scottish Social Housing Charter

Your landlord should...

- Treat you with fairness and respect
- Ask what you think about its services
- Let you know when repairs will be done and do them right first time
- Let you know what other site residents think
- Ask your views on any proposed rent rise
- Tell you who you can contact if you have questions or a complaint
- Report on how it is doing
- Make sure site services can be used by everyone

To find out more
To find out more about the Scottish Social Housing Charter, our report on Gypsy/Travellers sites in Scotland or to get in touch, you can visit our website or give us a call.

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk
0141 242 5642

We worked directly with Gypsy/Travellers to develop the poster.

Landlords should display the poster at all Gypsy/Travellers' sites.

What landlords with Gypsy/Traveller sites must do:

- ✓ Implement the recommendations of our thematic inquiry.
 - ✓ Prominently display our poster and promote its messages to site users.
 - ✓ Ensure that site users have access to a site manager.
 - ✓ Meet the Scottish Government's minimum site standards by June 2018.
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What we will do:

- ✓ Engage further with specific landlords about these findings.
- ✓ Assess and report on landlords' performance through the Annual Return on the Charter and include this in our annual risk assessment.
- ✓ Consider what our findings mean for how we regulate as we develop proposals for our new Regulatory Framework in 2018.





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