

National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter

Headline Findings

2018/19



About us

We are the independent regulator of social landlords in Scotland.

We safeguard and promote the interests of:

Around:

600,000

Tenants who live in homes provided by social landlords

Around:

123,000

Home owners who receive services of social landlords

Around:

49,000

People and their families who may be homeless and seek help from local authorities

Over:

400

Gypsy/Traveller families who use official sites provided by social landlords

We regulate:



188

Social landlords

156
32

Registered social landlords

Local authorities

Our role:

To monitor, assess and report on social landlords' performance of housing activities and RSLs' financial wellbeing and standards of governance. We intervene, where we need to, to protect the interests of tenants and service users.

Our Regulatory Framework explains how we regulate social landlords. It is available at:

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

About our national reports

Each year we provide an analysis of the information reported to us by Scottish social landlords on their performance in achieving the standards and outcomes in the [Scottish Social Housing Charter](#).

In this report we outline our analysis of landlords' Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) for 2018/19. It covers the same areas as our landlord reports and is published alongside them on 30 August. We comment on:

- » landlords' progress towards achieving the Charter standards and outcomes; and
- » the extent to which landlords have improved the services they provide to tenants and other service users.

We use the findings from our analysis to inform our regulatory activity and engagement, and in our annual risk assessment of RSLs and local authorities.

We also publish [performance data tables and performance data by Charter standard and outcome](#). These tables and data show:

- performance of social landlords over the last five years;
- performance in both RSL and local authority housing separately;
- the change in performance since last year; and
- performance by Charter standard and outcome.

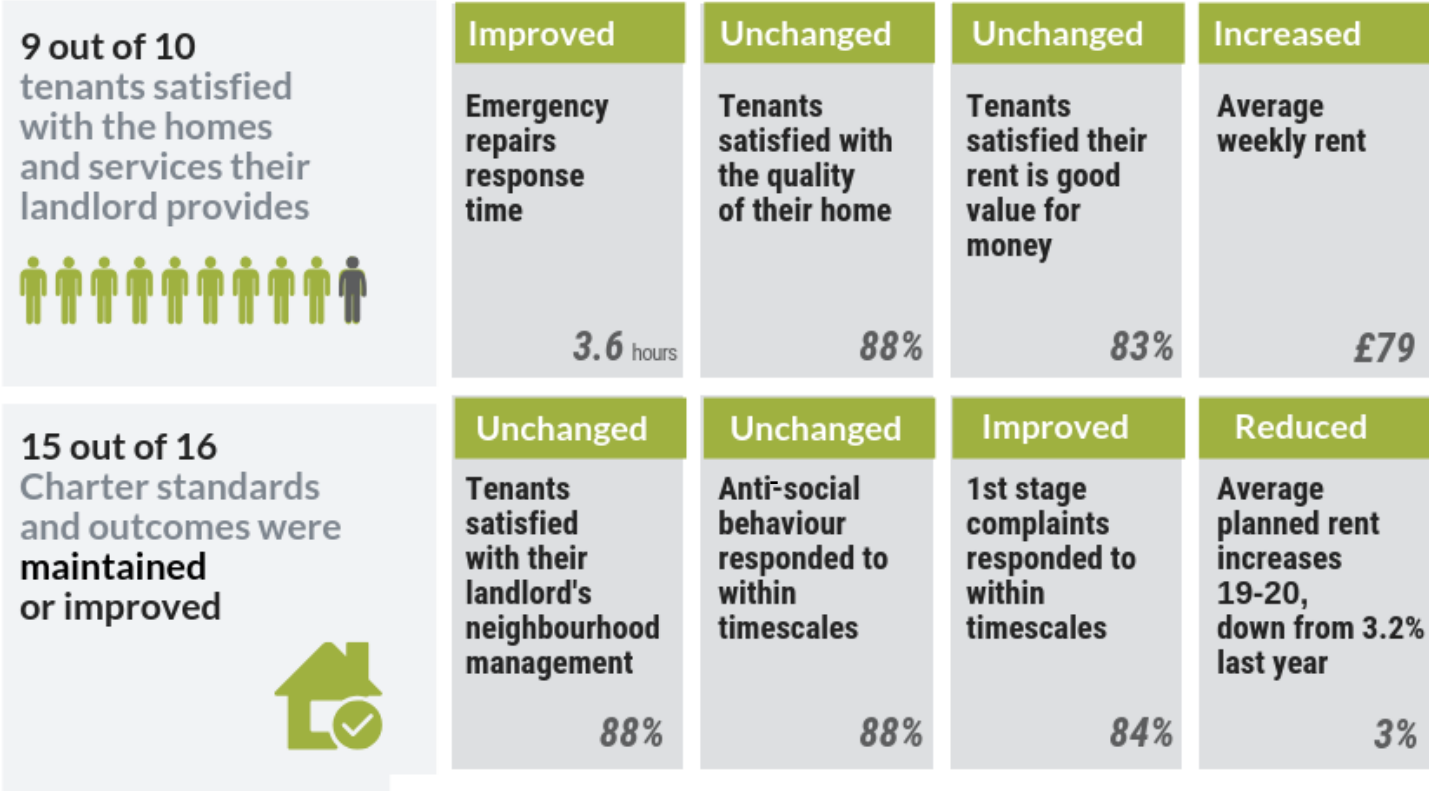
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Key results

Landlords are maintaining strong performance across the majority of the Charter standards and outcomes.

The general picture shows : Services that matter most to tenants:



The Charter indicators above show the overall national average & the change since last year.

Progress on the Charter



Scottish social landlords are performing well across most of the standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.



We reported improvement in performance across most Charter standards and outcomes in our National Reports from 2013/14 to 2016/17. Landlords have maintained that strong performance over the last two years.


Landlords continue to report strong performance in the service areas that are most important to tenants.

As part of our review of how we regulate...

We consulted on updated indicators last year, listened to the feedback, and published new indicators in early 2019. The indicators help us to monitor, assess and report on landlords' performance against the Charter. Landlords will collect performance information on the new indicators from April 2019 and we will begin to report on performance against these new indicators from 2020.

| Charter outcomes | Progress |
|---|---|
| Equalities |  |
| Communication |  |
| Participation |  |
| Quality of housing |  |
| Repairs, maintenance & improvement |  |
| Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance & tenancy disputes |  |
| Housing options & access to housing |  |
| Tenancy sustainment |  |
| Homeless people |  |
| Value for money |  |
| Rents & service charges |  |
| Gypsy/Travellers |  |

 Unchanged  Declined



**Services that matter
most to tenants
& service users**

Homes & rents

Homes

In 2018/19 Scottish social landlords provided 600,856 homes to rent, up by 4,863 from the year before. The number of local authority homes increased by 931 while the number of RSL homes increased by 3,932.

Rents

The average weekly rent for Scottish social landlords was £79 in 2018/19, up 3.7% on the previous year. Average local authority rents were just over £73, 14% lower than average RSL rents of £85.

Average tenant satisfaction with rent being good value for money is unchanged this year at 83%. While satisfaction amongst RSL tenants reduced from 84% to 83%, satisfaction amongst local authority tenants increased from 79% in 2017/18 to 82% in 2018/19.

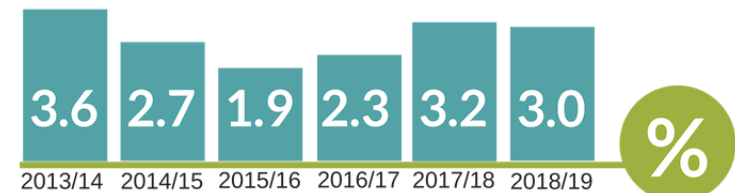
In our sixth National Panel report we explored people's views on rent affordability and found that...

More than a third of panel members who responded have experienced difficulties with affording their rent, while two thirds expressed concerns about affording their rent in the future. They gave various reasons for these concerns, with over a third mentioning future rent increases, almost a quarter mentioning future benefit changes and a sixth future changes to their income.

Homes available to rent

600,856  LAs [^]931
RSLs [^]3,932

Average planned rent increases



Average satisfaction with rent being good value for money

remains at



83%

Tenant satisfaction

Overall tenant satisfaction remains high

Tenant satisfaction with the homes and services provided by social landlords remains high, albeit marginally down on the previous year. Overall satisfaction has increased from 88% to 90% since 2013/14. For RSL tenants satisfaction with their overall service fell slightly from 92% to 91% in 2018/19 while for local authority tenants it increased from 83% to 86%.

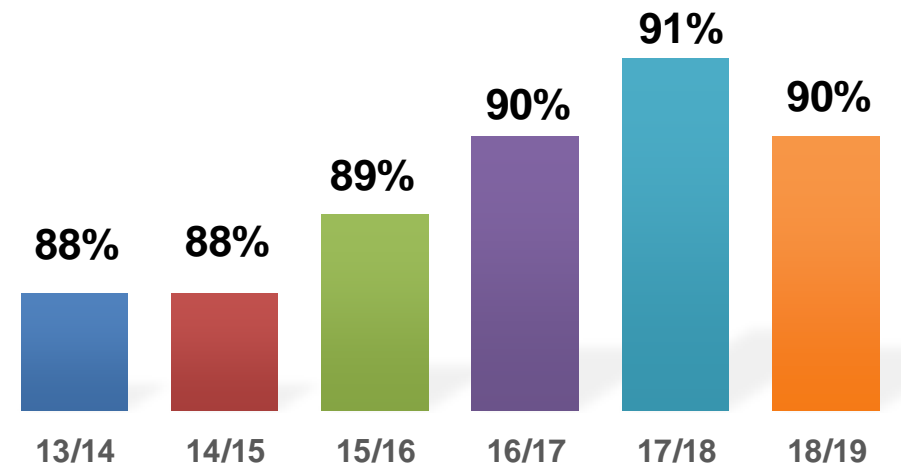


Overall tenant satisfaction

reduced to 90%

LAs **86%** RSLs **91%**

The percentage of tenants who said they were satisfied with the homes and services provided by their landlord 2013-2019



Quality of homes

Existing tenants' satisfaction with the quality of their homes remains high at 88%

Average satisfaction with the quality of homes for RSL tenants remains high at 89% and is up for local authority tenants to 85%.

Landlords have until 2020 to meet the first milestone for the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing (ESSH). Landlords have reported to us that 84% of homes in the scope of ESSH already meet this standard.

Existing tenants' satisfaction with the quality of their homes

remains at 88%



LAs **85%** RSLs **89%**

Nearly a quarter of respondents to the National Panel survey said they are not managing well with their current housing costs. This includes rent, energy bills and other costs. One in six are having financial difficulties or are in deep financial trouble, while more than half find it difficult to heat their home.

Percentage of homes compliant with ESSH

improved to 84%



Percentage of homes that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

remains at 94%



Other services

Mixed picture on satisfaction with other services

The Charter also covers performance of other services, including factoring, management of sites for Gypsy/Travellers and services for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

There continues to be a more mixed picture of user satisfaction with these services.

Of those households homeless in the last 12 months, average satisfaction with temporary or emergency accommodation improved from 88% last year to 89%. However, Scottish Government statistics show that some local authorities have failed to meet their duty to provide temporary accommodation, some have breached the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order and that people who are homeless often spend long periods of time in temporary accommodation waiting on settled accommodation.

Satisfaction amongst Gypsy/Travellers fell from 80% last year to 79%.

Owners' average satisfaction with factoring services has improved from 66% to 67% since last year.

Levels of satisfaction amongst Gypsy/Travellers and factored owners are still well behind those for other services provided by social landlords.

Average satisfaction with temporary or emergency accommodation

improved to 89%



Average satisfaction amongst Gypsy/Travellers

decreased to 79%



Average satisfaction with factoring services

improved to 67%



In our update report on Gypsy/Traveller sites in Scotland we said that landlords providing sites for Gypsy/Travellers must...

- implement the recommendations of our earlier thematic inquiry
- ensure that site users have access to a site manager
- prominently display our poster on its sites and promote its messages to site users
- meet Scottish Government's minimum site standards

In our sixth National Panel report we explored site users' views and experience and found that...

- site location, mix of residents, sense of community, and on-site wardens were the main positives for current site provision. Concerns mostly related to site condition and perceived lack of investment
- awareness of Gypsy/Traveller site standards appeared limited. Most feel that site standards are a positive for tenants in judging the quality of services and ensuring equity with other social tenants. Quality and condition of facilities were seen as the key standards
- views were generally positive on landlords' management of works to meet standards, particularly where tenants had input to the design/planning process. There was frustration where works were delayed or cancelled

In our sixth National Panel report we explored people's experiences of the homelessness system and found that...

- the majority found it straightforward to access homeless services. The main concerns for people when first contacting the services were the lack of clarity about entitlement and the suitability of temporary accommodation
- most were very positive about their initial engagement with homelessness services and the role of support staff, particularly around help with benefits and access to other services
- for those in crisis, speed of response was seen as important, and most were able to access temporary accommodation within 24 to 48 hours. Most said they could not get information on how long they would have to wait for a permanent home
- most were positive about the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation. They felt safe and could keep in touch with family and friends. A substantial proportion though had been moved around a number of temporary accommodation places, which caused disruption and distress, particularly for those with children.
- a substantial proportion of participants had waits of one to two years or more to access their own tenancy which could have a negative impact on their wellbeing and mental health

Repairs and maintenance

Overall landlord performance on repairs and maintenance remains in a strong position

Most landlords respond quickly to emergency repairs and non-emergency repairs. In particular, local authorities and RSLs have continued to improve their response times for emergency repairs.

After improving steadily since 2012/13, tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance remains unchanged at 92%.

Average tenant satisfaction with the repairs service remains high at 92%. Satisfaction is higher amongst RSL tenants at 93% than for local authority tenants at 87%.

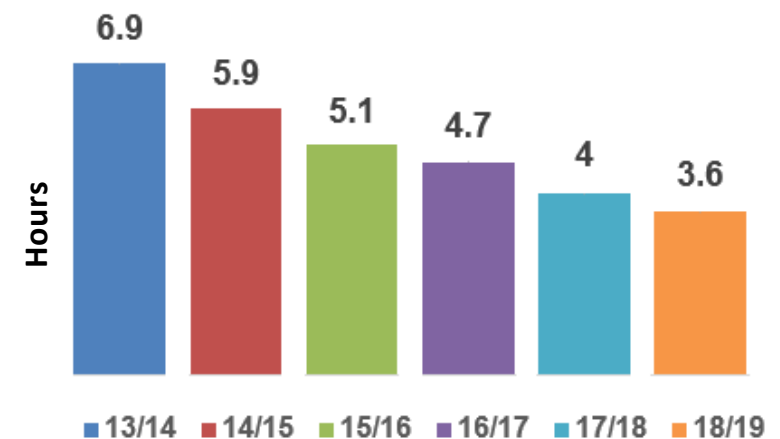
Performance on repairs completed right first time remains high and has improved marginally to 93%.

Our thematic report on repairs services in Scotland found that...

The areas of repairs service most important to tenants and service users are:

- being treated with courtesy and respect
- speed and efficiency of repairs
- landlords having clear and consistent repairs policies
- flexibility of the repairs service
- being kept informed

Emergency repairs response time



Non-emergency repairs
completed right first time

improved to

93%



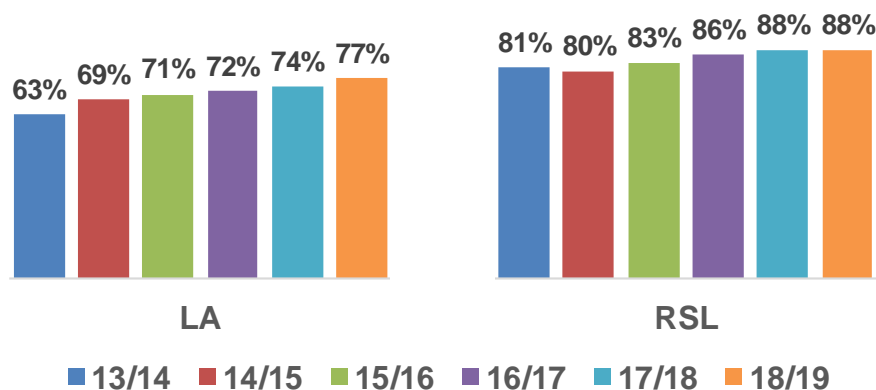
Tenant satisfaction with opportunities to participate

Landlords are generally good at engaging with their tenants

Average levels of tenant satisfaction with being kept informed by their landlord remain at 92%, having improved steadily between 2013/14 and 2016/17.

For satisfaction with opportunities to participate, average tenant satisfaction has improved from 86% to 87% for 2018/19. While satisfaction amongst RSL tenants remained the same at 88%, local authority tenant satisfaction rose by 3% to 77%.

Tenant satisfaction with opportunities to participate



In our sixth National Panel report we explored members' experience of and interest in tenant participation as well as views on the extent to which they can influence their landlord's decision making. We found...

- widespread awareness of and interest in tenant participation with 84% wanting to get more involved. Tenant forums and surveys were the most popular options but participants wanted a range of opportunities
- members referred to benefits of tenant participation: a sense of community, feeling landlords are listening and improved confidence and communication
- frustration where they had not seen results of exercises and/or views not taken into account. Some felt landlords could do more to ensure exercises include a better cross-section of service users.

Want to know more?

You can see the landlord reports, comparison tool and data tables on our website www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk. For more analysis, a full dataset of all landlords' performance information is also available.





**Scottish Housing
Regulator**

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