

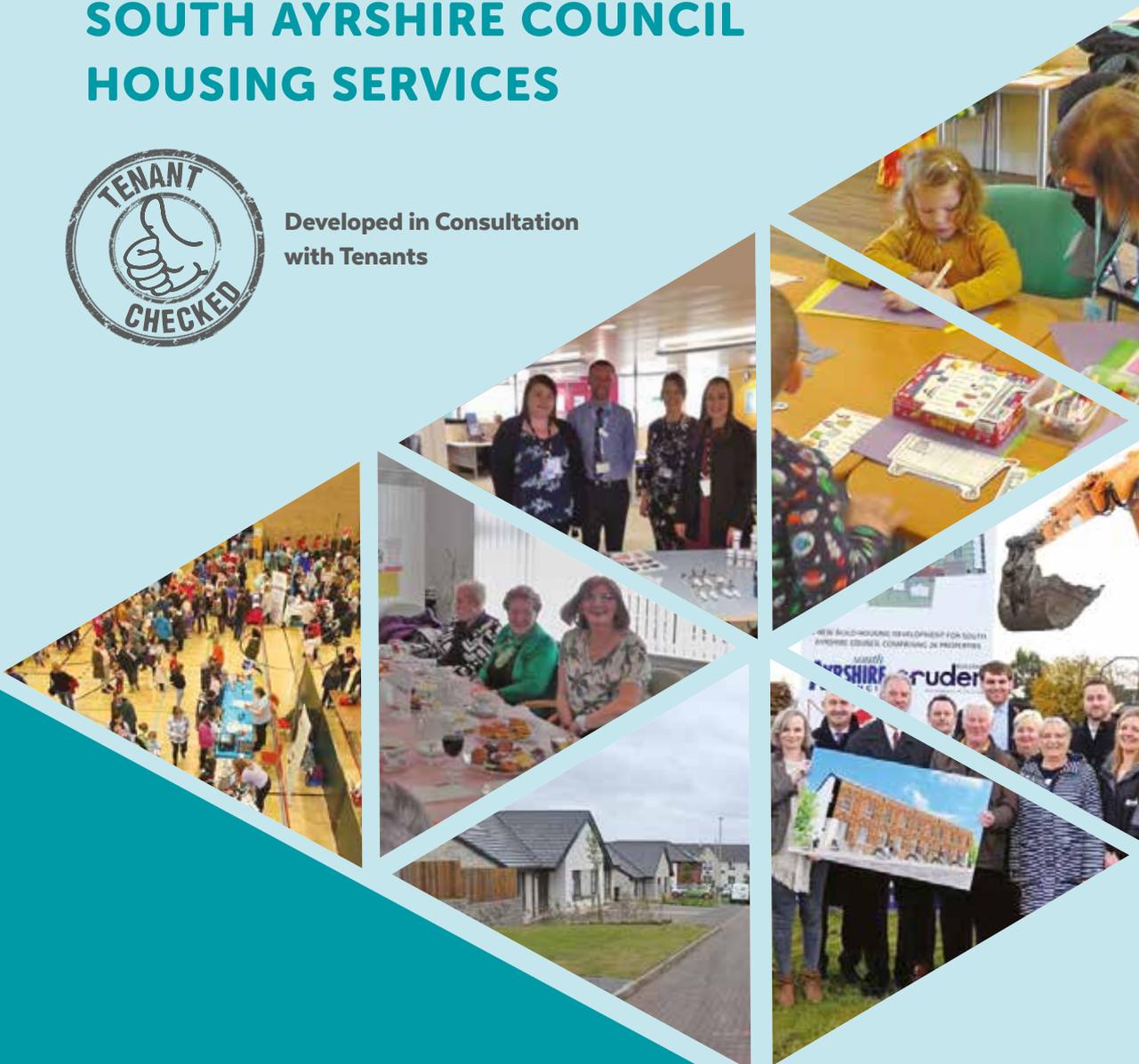
OUR PERFORMANCE

2018/19 1ST APRIL 2018 - 31ST MARCH 2019

SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES



Developed in Consultation
with Tenants



INSIDE..

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**PLUS
MUCH
MORE!**



Councillor Philip Saxton

Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Wellbeing

As Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Wellbeing, it again gives me great pleasure to introduce the Council's 6th annual performance report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

This Charter report is produced to give our tenants and other customer's information about our housing services, how well they are delivered and how we as a Council compare with other social landlords across Scotland. During 2018/19, we continued to invest in building new council properties and we purchased properties to increase our supply of affordable housing. We also carried out elements of improvement

work in 1739 properties across our existing housing stock. Our teams continued to support tenants who are now in receipt of Universal Credit and we continued to deliver our housing service, improving performance in a number of areas.

Our work with tenant representatives continued throughout the year, providing opportunities to share information on services and performance. Officers have supported tenants to undertake a "tenant-led inspection" on the Council's Letting Standard, increasing their scrutiny role within the service.

As in previous years, I have to acknowledge the ongoing work, commitment and dedication of the tenant representatives who continue to give up their own time to help shape and improve our services. In producing this 6th annual report, tenant representatives have influenced the content and design.

As we have done in previous years, we will issue the report to tenants who have requested it. Copies of this report will also be available on the Council website and in all Customer Service Centres.

I hope you will find this report useful.

South Ayrshire Council Customer Services 0300 123 0900

Housing repairs, housing enquiries and payments, special uplifts, council tax enquiries and payments, waste management.

Tenants Foreword

Another year has come and gone with involved tenants and Housing Officers compiling the 6th edition of the annual 'Our Performance' report.

As involved tenants, we can certainly say that we have been vital in scrutinising the Housing Service providing constructive criticism and praise where warranted. Many of our key performance figures have improved once again with positive changes being made continuously.

This is a great achievement for all who work in the area and we thank them most sincerely for their efforts. It is also good to note that rents in

South Ayrshire remain below the Scottish Average while our homes are continually being improved and maintained to a high standard. We can't emphasise enough that our monitoring role can only continue and be of even more value in the future if all tenants complete and return any satisfaction surveys they receive. It really is 'the more the merrier' for survey returns to assist both us and Council Officers.

Over the past year, some tenants have spent endless hours in assessing the outdated Letting Standard with a report on the findings being presented to Housing Services in October 2019.

We are not a closed or exclusive group and any tenant can become involved in assessments like the one previously mentioned or at any level they want. You can make a positive contribution by helping to continue to make improvements to the Housing Service. After all, it is our rent money being used to help deliver housing services in South Ayrshire.

We would like to express our sincerest thanks to all who have worked over the past year to support tenants and ensure that we have a good Housing Service.

SOME KEY FACTS ABOUT SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL AS AT 31ST MARCH 2019:

South Ayrshire Council currently owns and manages **8,152** properties, made up of general needs housing and sheltered housing designed for older people or people who need housing support. Our stock is made up mainly of flats (over 50%), with the remainder being a mix of houses, maisonettes and bungalows.

4,475

Applicants registered on our waiting lists.

756

lets were made by the Council during the year:-

697

were 'general needs' lets

59

were 'sheltered housing' lets

100

There were 100 empty properties at the year end

50

Mutual Exchanges

8,152

homes owned and managed by the Council, made up as follows:-

66

Bedsit properties

2,476

1 bedroom properties

3,467

2 bedroom properties

1,975

3 bedroom properties

168

4 bedroom plus properties

32

properties were added to our stock 12 new build council owned properties were completed and 20 properties were purchased by the Council.

539

of our 8152 properties are sheltered housing properties.

323

We carried out 323 adaptations in 229 of our properties during 2018/19 to assist tenants who have a disability. 88.1% of approved medical applications were completed in 2018/19. The average time to complete medical adaptations was 67.6 days.



Who is the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)?



SHR is the independent regulator of Registered Social Landlords and local authority housing services in Scotland.

SHR was established on 1 April 2011 under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. SHR has one statutory objective, to:

“safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants of social landlords, people who are or may become homeless, and people who use housing

services provided by registered social landlords (RSLs) and local authorities”

SHR regulate social landlords to protect the interests of people who receive services from them. They do this by assessing and reporting on:

- how social landlords are performing their housing services
- RSLs’ financial well-being
- RSLs’ standards of governance

SHR will intervene to secure improvements where they need to.

New Regulatory Framework

In February 2019, the Scottish Housing Regulator published a new Regulatory Framework, entitled ‘Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland’. This is a statement setting out how they regulate Registered Social Landlords and the housing and homelessness services provided by Councils.

The Regulator now publishes an Engagement Plan for each landlord, this outlines what they will do and what the Regulatory returns landlord must provide them.

To view the Engagement Plan visit the regulators website at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/engagementplans



Stepping Up to Scrutiny

Stepping Up to Scrutiny is a training programme which was commissioned by the Scottish Government and initially delivered through CIH Scotland and House Mark Scotland. The programme was designed to help improve performance of housing services and includes the following objectives:

- Embedding a culture of scrutiny in organisations (including governance arrangements)

- Empowering tenants - understanding scrutiny, able to give peer support.
- Strengthening connections - between scrutiny and performance management, value for money.

During 2018/19 tenants started a Tenant Led Inspection of the Council’s Letting Standard. This inspection is ongoing and a report will be published later this year.

How we have reported our Performance Information

This report includes key performance indicators that have been published by the Scottish Housing Regulator following consultation and feedback they received.

In addition to this, we as a Council have consulted our own tenant representatives and agreed to add some additional indicators and information that they wanted to see included. Throughout this report we have included details of

our performance and have compared this to the Scottish average. This is the average of all landlords (Council and Housing Associations) across Scotland.

You can:

- > find out more about the information contained in the Regulators report, and find out more about the role and work of the Regulator. To do this, you can visit the Regulators website at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

- > view our annual landlord reports
- > compare our performance with other selected landlords
- > see all of the information that we reported on the Charter to the Regulator

If following this report, you want to find out more about our performance or would like to ask any questions you can contact us directly. In addition the Scottish Housing Regulator’s website has lots of information about us as a landlord.

Tenant Participation Update

Get involved in your Housing Service!

There are a lot of different opportunities for South Ayrshire Tenants to become involved in the decision making process of the Housing Service. We have continued to develop new ways that will attract tenants to get involved in formal and informal ways. Over the last year we have worked tirelessly with our involved tenants to;

- ★ **Develop our Tenants Choir** where tenants can come together and learn breathing techniques and exercises that will allow them to sing better and stay active.
- ★ **Undertook our first Tenant Led Assessment.** Tenants of our Scrutiny and Performance Maintenance group have been extremely active in assessing the councils current letting standard by interviewing staff and carrying out site visits. The tenants will finalise their report with recommendations later in the year.
- ★ **Set up a series of Musical Generations** sessions with Centrestage. Our Musical Generations project visits our sheltered housing units giving tenants an opportunity to take part in songs from the past and interact with other tenants and officers in a more informal manner.
- ★ **Scrutinise the activity of the Housing Revenue Account.** Our HRA Scrutiny group has been active in scrutinising the HRA and have attended various information sessions to find out more about the services the HRA receive.
- ★ **Complete our Tenant Participation Strategy for 2019 - 2022.** The TP Strategy working group signed off our revised TP Strategy after reviewing and deciding on our priorities in Tenant Participation for the coming years.
- ★ **Communities Fun Day.** Continuing on from the success of our previous Communities Fun Day, we delivered our third Fun Day with over 2700 people attending.



Awards, Awards, Awards!



Congratulations to Tenant Participation Officer Gordon Campbell after being presented with

the Runner up Tenant Participation Champion: Individual Staff Award at the National Housing Conference held in Aviemore, hosted by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Scotland) in November.

The award recognises all of Gordon's hard work in delivering Tenant Participation outcomes to our tenants and increasing the range of activities for tenants to become involved in and have their say. Gordon Campbell, said: "There are many beneficial projects being

undertaken across Scotland by some dedicated Tenant Participation Officers. It was a great privilege to be shortlisted and go on to pick up the runner up award"

We could not achieve the above without the commitment of our tenant volunteers. If you would like to be a part of some of these projects and help us achieve even more in the coming years, then get in touch with the tenant participation team on **01292 612968** or email **tp@south-ayrshire.gov.uk**

Getting good value from rents and service charges

In 2018/19 the total rent due for the reporting year was **£30,122,068**. We collected **£29,922,368** (this figure includes current and advance rent payments, housing benefit and rent arrears recovered), which was **99.3%** of the total rent due in the year compared to the Scottish average of **99.1%**.

The gross rent arrears as at 31st March 2019 were **£960,049**. This was made up of both current tenant arrears and former tenant arrears. The overall arrears outstanding were **3.16%** of the total rent due for 2018/19.

The Council was paid housing costs directly

through housing benefit for **5,945** households; the total value of payments received in the reporting year was **£18,505,070**.

Following consultation with tenants in October and November 2017 the Council agreed to apply a fixed rent increase of **2%** per annum for the 3 year period 2018/19 to 2020/21, along with a rent freeze on new build properties and a reduction in the rent level of 1 bedroom new build properties to match the local housing allowance cap.

Our average weekly rents remain below the Scottish average across all apartment sizes.

Average weekly rent for each apartment size in 2018/19			
APARTMENT SIZE	S.A.C.	SCOTTISH AVERAGE	DIFFERENCE
1 Apartment	£66.68	£70.22	-5%
2 Apartment	£71.57	£76.10	-6%
3 Apartment	£73.39	£77.70	-5.6%
4 Apartment	£77.48	£84.44	-8.2%
5+ Apartment	£81.80	£93.49	-12.5%

72.8%

of tenants felt that the rent for their property represented good value for money.

19.4%

of tenants felt that the rent for their property represented neither good nor poor value for money.

7.8%

of tenants felt that the rent for their property represented poor value for money.

Making Best Use of Our Housing Stock and Maximising Rental Income

We are working to make improvements and reduce the overall time we take to re-let empty properties. In 2018/19 the average length of time to re-let properties was **31.6 days** compared to **35 days** in 2017/18. The Scottish average was **31.9 days**.

The amount of rent we lost through properties being empty during

2018/19 was **£284,757**. This accounts for a **0.9%** rent loss, which is compared to the Scottish Average of **0.9%**.

When allocating properties in 2018/19, we made **1603** offers to applicants, **804 (50.2%)** were refused within the year compared to **47.6%** in 2017/18.

Help Us to Continue to Reduce Refusals

We undertake an annual review of housing applications and would encourage applicants to ensure that the choices of neighbourhoods and house types accurately reflect the areas and types of property that they would be willing to accept.

This should help us reduce the number of refusals and reduce the time taken to allocate empty properties.



81.5% of tenants were satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in.

Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) ensures that tenants' rents paid to the Council are only used to meet the services required to manage and maintain our Council houses. Our total budget, including rents and use of reserves was **£37,314,591** and our expenditure was **£35,018,109**. This resulted in a surplus of **£2,296,482**. When this amount is added to our existing reserves, we have a balance in our accounts of **£9.357 million**. **£5.761 million** of these funds are required to fund larger projects in future years. The balance of **£3.596 million** will be held as uncommitted surplus for future investment or emergency situations.

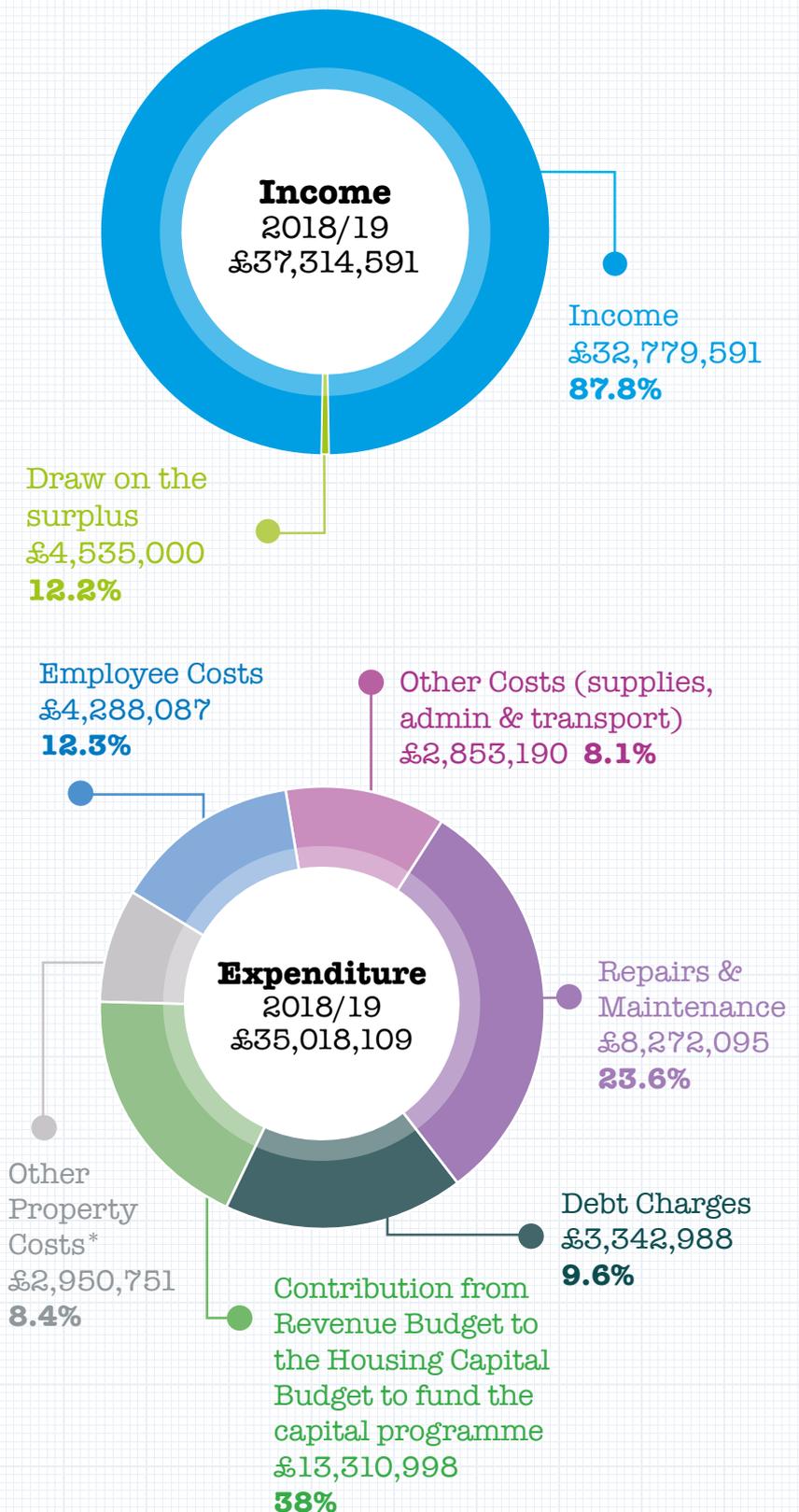
Information on the Housing Revenue Account

We held an event with tenants on 6th December 2018, to provide tenants with information about the Housing Revenue Account budget and expenditure for 2017/18. We also provided details of the proposed budget for 2018/19.

The next meeting for tenants, where we will outline the budget and expenditure for 2018/19 and the progress in 2019/20 will be held on the 28th November 2019.

Please contact the Tenant Participation Team 01292 612968 for further details or to register for this event.

How Your Rent Money Is Used



*Rates, Water & Sewerage, Gas & Electricity, Fencing Works, Adaptations, Cleaning & Asbestos Management.



99.3% of rent was collected as a percentage of total rent due in the year.

Housing Quality & Maintenance Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements.

During 2018/19, **£7.6 million** was direct investment to deal with or prevent **1,739** properties failing the **Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)**, with the remainder being spent maintaining the standard and delivering improvements to our housing stock and neighbourhoods.

In 2018/19, we:

- ✓ Installed **669** new kitchens
- ✓ Installed **146** new bathrooms
- ✓ Carried out full rewiring including the installation of new smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors in **9** properties
- ✓ Replaced smoke detectors in **92** properties as part of our cyclical replacement programme
- ✓ Improved loft insulation in **540** properties
- ✓ Carried out roof replacements on **71** properties, re-rendered **187** properties and installed External Wall Insulation and Render to **8** properties, improving overall **195** properties
- ✓ Installed new double glazed windows in **112** properties. **79** of these were in the villages of Ballantrae, Barr, Barrhill and Colmonell. **33** properties at Ardfin Sheltered Housing Unit, Prestwick also received new windows.
- ✓ Replaced **279** full central heating systems and replaced **47** central heating boilers
- ✓ Installed door entry systems in blocks of flats, benefiting **74** council owned properties
- ✓ Carried out rewiring to kitchens and installed new smoke, heat and carbon monoxide detectors in **662** properties

86 (1.1%) of our properties were in abeyance or exemption typically due to owners who did not wish to participate in communal improvements, or tenants who were unable to have work completed due to health issues. **112 (1.4%)** of our properties failed the standard due to energy measures. Our remaining stock of **7,907 (97.5%)** met SHQS, compared to the Scottish average of **94.1%**.

Energy Agency Project

The Scottish Government ABS (Area Based Schemes) Programme helped South Ayrshire Council manage a project in which **275** properties received external wall insulation in 2018/19. **147** of these properties were in private ownership, **87** owned by South Ayrshire Council and **41** owned by Housing Associations. The project focused on external wall insulation which is a bespoke installation system designed to insulate properties, meaning residents do not need to have their heating system on as often, which reduces their fuel bills.



Properties in Colmonell following completion of window Replacement, Re-Roofing and Re-Rendering.



The window replacement programme is continuing throughout non-gas areas in 2019/20 and will include properties in Dailly, Old Dailly, Pinmore, Dunure and Maidens.

Repairs

In 2018/19 we spent **£8,272,095** on repairs and maintenance to our housing stock.

Key Performance Statistics for Repairs and Maintenance to our properties during 2018/19:

	2.4 hours	2.4 hours was the average time we took to complete an emergency repair in 2018/19 against our 4 hour target. The Scottish average was 3.6 hours .
	7.9 days	7.9 days was the average time we took to complete non-emergency (urgent and routine) repairs in 2018/19, compared to the Scottish average of 6.6 days .
	98.9%	98.9% of reactive repairs carried out in the last year were completed right the first time compared to the Scottish average of 92.5% .
	98.7%	We kept 98.7% of our repairs appointments, compared to the Scottish average of 95.6% .
	91.7%	91.7% of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months were satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service compared to the Scottish average of 91.7% . 2.5% of tenants were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service. 5.8% of tenants were dissatisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.

Safety In Your Home

We also carry out annual checks on oil, solid fuel and electric boiler heating systems. In addition we carry out 5 yearly fixed electrical testing and we replace smoke detectors every 10 years.

Please provide access to your home to allow this essential safety work to be completed.



Information on Number of Repairs Completed

We completed **31,429** reactive repairs during 2018/19.

11,934 were categorised as Emergency repairs.

19,495 were Non-Emergency repairs, made up of:-

- > **8,168** Urgent repairs
- > **9,402** Routine repairs
- > **1,925** Repairs appointments.

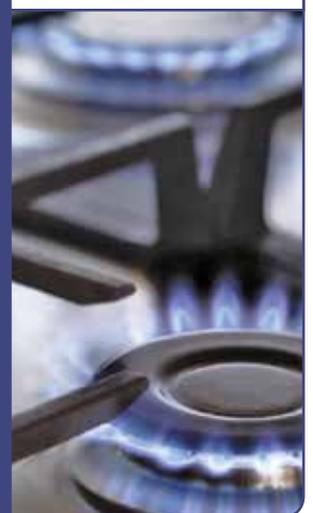
The average number of reactive repairs completed for each occupied property was **4**.

Gas Safety

7,055 of our properties required a gas safety check in 2018/19. **7,054 (99.99%)** of gas safety inspections were completed within 12 months of the previous inspection.

As part of the annual gas safety check, our Contractor will also check the smoke detectors in your home to ensure they are working effectively.

It is important that **all** tenants allow access to the Councils' authorised Gas Contractor for this important check. As a landlord, the Council has a legal obligation to ensure it is completed and where necessary will follow processes to gain entry to a property to complete the check. If we require to gain entry to your home, you will be recharged for the cost of this work.



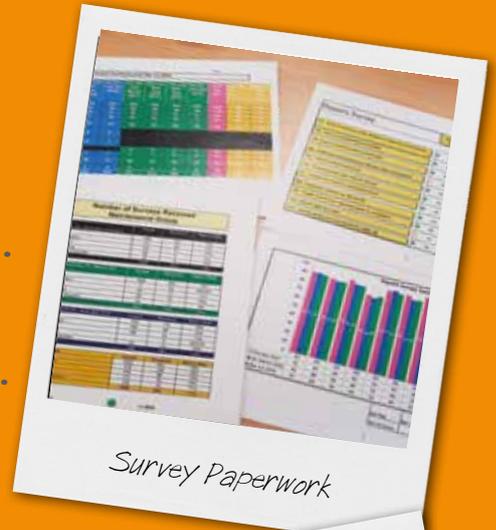
Satisfaction & feedback

*Help us improve the Housing Service -
Tell us what you think*

We continue to use Satisfaction Surveys to gather feedback from our tenants and other customers. This is to help us to develop and continually improve services. The surveys that we use were developed in consultation with tenant representatives and are in place to give you the opportunity to tell us how well we are doing as your landlord and whether there are things we could do better. It is important to us that we hear from as many of our customers as possible and we would encourage you to take the time to complete our surveys.

Throughout last year we issued tracker surveys to gather your feedback on key elements of service. We have discussed the feedback received at events with tenant representatives. Some examples of changes we have already made to how we deliver services are included in the You Said/We Did section on page 11.

85.4% of tenants were satisfied with the quality of their home



Survey Paperwork



Our tenant participation team review your feedback and ensure that your voice is heard.

In the last comprehensive survey carried out by Research Resource on the Council's behalf in March 2017, satisfaction results were as follows:

Satisfaction with the overall service provided by the Council as a Landlord

90.4%

90.4% of tenants were satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council as a Landlord, compared to the Scottish average of **90.1%**.

How good did tenants feel we were as a Landlord, at keeping them informed about our services and decisions?

97.4%

97.4% of tenants were satisfied that as a Landlord we were good at keeping them informed about our services and decisions, compared to the Scottish average of **91.6%**.

Satisfaction with the opportunities we gave tenants to participate in our decision making processes

98.6%

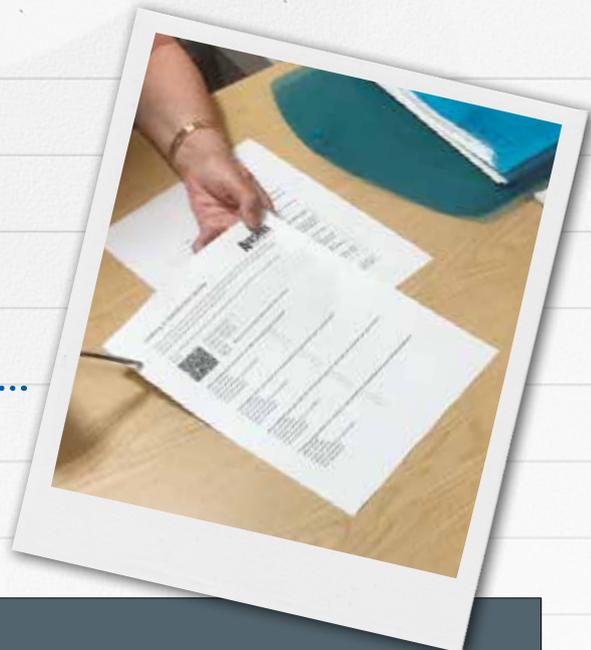
98.6% of tenants were satisfied with the opportunities we gave tenants to participate in our decision making processes, compared to the Scottish average of **86.5%**.

We review all feedback and where possible follow up on any negative comments or levels of dissatisfaction, to help us improve services.

The next Comprehensive Tenants Survey will be undertaken before March 2020.

YOU SAID: WE DID

The table below shows comments that we have received from tenants, service users and customers during 2018/19 and the improvements we have made as a result of them:



YOU SAID 	WE DID 
That additional support would be helpful following the introduction of Universal Credit.	Throughout 2018/19, our staff have continued to provide additional support for tenants with Universal Credit. Every member of staff within the Revenue, Arrears and Support Team has received Universal Credit support training from the DWP.
You stated that garden boundaries were unclear when viewing properties.	A process has been put in place to ensure that staff are aware of the garden boundaries and are able to advise prospective tenants.
You said that there was poor communication at the end of an Anti-Social Behaviour investigation, when a case is closing.	It is now part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure to issue a letter to the complainant in advance of the case being closed.
You would like us to ensure that we contact our tenants before attending the property to advise we are on our way to carry out repairs.	The introduction of the Work Scheduling System for Repairs means that tenants appointments are being confirmed by text with a further text being sent when the trade operative is on their way to the property.

The satisfaction surveys that tenants complete throughout the year allow us to identify areas where there are high levels of satisfaction.

The quotes below highlight areas where our tenants think we are performing well:

 "I am very satisfied with any help from the council in the past and also now the present, thank you."

 "Everyone we spoke to was very professional and friendly."

 "The comments I would like to make are your staff are very helpful & really nice on the telephone. All in all, due to staff, all went well"

 "We found the staff very helpful. All processing was handled quickly with good communication."

 "I received excellent service. Could not fault the staff in any way."

 "All staff were more than helpful and kind, nothing was a problem for them."

 "I was given info I never would have thought to ask for."

 "My experience with South Ayrshire Council was very helpful and the staff were very polite and very understanding. The staff explained the housing application to help me understand what I was doing."

We also value negative comments made by our tenants as it shows us areas in which we can improve.

The quotes below are some examples of feedback that we have received from our tenants that show areas in which we could improve. These issues were followed up by the Council on receipt of the feedback.

 "Only able to move in 2 weeks ago as there were burst pipes in the property when I got the keys initially."

 "Due to the condition of the property it took longer than expected to move in."

Neighbourhood & Community

We continually strive to improve the quality of our neighbourhoods.

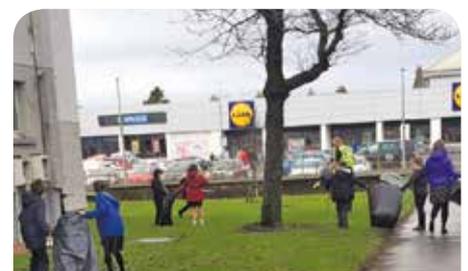
The feedback you provide assists us to review our processes to ensure we are increasing the quality of your neighbourhoods. Your feedback also allows us to identify areas for targeted community clean ups and targeted cleaning of estates and closes.



Services working in partnership during community clean up days



Housing Officers getting involved in community clean up days



Children taking part in community clean up

Estate Management Inspections

Last year we increased our inspections of neighbourhoods, with the aim of improving the quality of the gardens, closes and common areas within our estates.

These inspections are carried out across South Ayrshire by Housing Assistants, who will deal with any issues that they find and issue letters to individual tenants where they are required. Any reports of fly tipping that we receive are dealt with as quickly after we receive the information as possible.

Housing staff have also worked alongside tenants, pupils from Newton Primary, Police, Community Safety and Elected Members to undertake community clean ups.

Anti-Social Behaviour

In 2018/19, **283** cases of anti-social behaviour were reported to the council, **237** of those cases were resolved in the reporting year, **236**

of which were resolved within the locally agreed targets. This equated to a reported performance of **83.4%**. There were **46** cases which were reported during 2018/19 that were not closed as at 31st March 2019. However, none of these cases were outwith the timescales of the locally agreed targets.

Abandonments

In 2018/19 the Council recovered possession of **100** properties following investigations which confirmed they were abandoned.

We actively investigate and follow up on any reports of unoccupied properties therefore if you have concerns regarding an abandoned property please contact your local housing office on **0300 123 0900**.

In addition if Housing Services make a number of attempts to contact tenants and carry out unsuccessful visits to properties, we will start the investigation process for abandonment.

COMMUNITIES FUN DAY

Over 2,700 residents attended the annual Communities Fun Day in September of 2018 making it the most successful year yet!

The event which was organised by South Ayrshire Council in partnership with tenants was a triumph with fun for all the family. Some of the attractions that were at the event included a petting zoo, surfboard simulator and a range of fun rides.

In addition to this, there was a variety of information stalls set up by South Ayrshire Council and a number of other charities and local community groups where tenants could get some helpful advice and support.



92.2%

of tenants told us they were satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood they live in.

Service to Gypsy / Travellers

The Council has continued to offer a temporary site to Gypsy/Travellers. In 2018/19 the average weekly rent for a pitch was £76.53.

Development of our new Travelling Person Site

The new permanent Travelling Persons Site was approved by the Council, and this has been named “Houdston Reid Lea” and is located on Coalpots Road, Girvan. The construction started in January 2019 and was completed ahead of schedule with handover taking place in August 2019. The new site has 7 chalet type units and residents were consulted on the design. The units have been built to meet ‘Housing for Varying Needs’ standards and to meet current sustainability and energy efficiency standards.



SHELTERED HOUSING NEWS

Within South Ayrshire, Housing Services manage 539 properties across 18 Sheltered Housing Units. We are committed to ensuring that our properties and units fully meet the needs of our tenants.

outings, men’s dens, craft groups, lunch clubs, coffee clubs and film clubs. Please feel free to pop along to your nearest Sheltered Housing Unit to find out more and share your interests and hobbies with others.

Our Sheltered Housing Units provide communities within South Ayrshire with a facility to prevent social isolation for older people. Each unit provides a wide range of activities and events such as;

Our Sheltered Housing staff and tenants continue to raise funds within the units by holding a variety of fundraising events. Throughout 2018/19, over £8000 was raised with all funds benefiting various charities.

Musical Generations

Residents at Sheltered Housing Units throughout South Ayrshire have been taking part in Centrestage’s Musical Generations project. The project enables tenants to enjoy a session of music, movement, entertainment and refreshments from within the Sheltered Housing Units. The sessions have been a huge success with Sheltered Housing residents throughout South Ayrshire coming along and getting involved.

www.facebook.com/sachousingservices/videos/646511005761115/



Residents celebrating South Ayrshire Council Sheltered Housing’s success in the National Housing for Older People Awards.



Over £2500 was raised in aid of Young Carers by Sheltered Housing residents and staff



Tenants taking part in Musical Generations

Hostels, Supported Accommodation and Temporary Accommodation



One of the newly decorated and furnished Emergency Rooms located at Viewfield Gate.

The Council continues to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households. We currently own and manage three hostels and supported accommodation units. We also use properties from our own housing stock and the private rented sector as dispersed temporary accommodation.

In 2018/19, **87.6%** of the households that were homeless in the last 12 months were satisfied with the quality of the temporary or emergency accommodation.

Service users share their opinions with us through feedback surveys.

Here are some of the direct quotes received in 2018/19:

"Very very good, the best!"

"Couldn't have been more satisfied with the property. Was such a quick response. Such a spacious property."

"Great space. Great area. Everything I needed was available. Very clean. Everything was clear. Support was there if I needed it. Very helpful."

Access to Housing & Support

Demand for Housing in South Ayrshire remains high. As at 31st March 2019 we had **4,475** applications registered on our waiting list, with **756** new lets being made in the year.

In 2018/19 we purchased **12** new build properties at Northpark Court in Girvan and we purchased **20**

properties through the buy back scheme to increase our supply of affordable housing.

26 new properties were built on the site of the former Whitletts Primary School in Ayr - construction at the School Gardens site was completed in August 2019.



School Gardens, Ayr

Homelessness

In 2018/19, **1301** housing options interviews were conducted and applicants were provided with advice and information to help them make more informed housing choices. **871** of those **1301** went on to make a homeless presentation.

This is an increase on the **760** homeless presentations made in 2017/18. Work on housing options and prevention activity is continuing and staff are providing advice and information to an increasing number of applicants.

The Council continue to work closely with other Registered Social Landlords in the area to ensure that applicants on our housing list have access to vacant properties through nominations or referrals.

For the 4th year running, the Council did not use bed and breakfast as temporary accommodation for homeless households during 2018/19.

Achievements

Digital Inclusion/Our Use of Technology - Our Housing Officers now have access to Laptops and Mobile Devices, this provides access to up to date information and allows the Officers to help tenants in their home.

In March 2019, we introduced a new "Information at Work System" which allows us to scan and electronically store information for housing applications, this reduces the use of paper documents. We are working to implement this across the housing service.

Empty Houses - We have continued to work on ways to reduce the length of time it takes to allocate empty houses. The average time to relet an empty house in 2018/19 was 31.6 days down from 35 days in 2017/18.

Allocations Policy - In February 2019, the Scottish Government published a new guidance

document entitled "Social housing allocations in Scotland: practice guide", Officers are reviewing this practice guide and are continuing to work on preparing proposals for reviewing our Allocations Policy.

Developing our Approach to Tenant Scrutiny - Over the course of 2018/19, tenants have undertaken a tenant-led inspection on the Council's Letting Standard. This has involved carrying out inspections of empty properties before and after repair work and interviewing Officers. The tenant representatives are in the process of preparing a report on their findings.

Work Scheduling System for Repairs - On 18th March 2019, the repairs work scheduling system was introduced. Appointments are now being scheduled for all joiners, plumbers, electricians, builders, slaters and plasterers. All repairs once scheduled should now have an appointment to suit the tenant which

will be confirmed via text message. A further text message will then be sent to the tenant when the tradesperson is on their way.

Introduction of Housing First Pilot Project - The Council introduced this scheme recognising that many people find managing a home difficult, especially in cases where the person has additional support needs.

Housing First provides:

- an independent, decorated and furnished home in the community
- help to access a range of support services
- intensive housing support that meets people's needs

By offering good quality accommodation with a person-centred support, Housing First contributes towards tenancy sustainment.



Michael Alexander
Service Lead, Housing Services

Over the last year, our team has continued to provide high quality housing services and improve performance. We reduced the length of time houses are empty to an average of 31.6 days in 2018/19, down from 35 days 2017/18, and we will continue to work to reduce this further.

In 2018/19, over £7.6m was spent directly on improving the housing stock to meet and maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. In addition, we spent over £8.2m on repairs and maintenance, completing 31,429 responsive

repairs. Almost 12,000 of these were emergencies, which were dealt with in an average of 2.4 hours, an improvement on 2.7 hours in 2017/18 and well below our 4 hour target and the Scottish average of 3.6 hours.

In January 2019, the Council approved a draft Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, which was submitted to the Scottish Government. This plan outlines proposals to help prevent homelessness and support households affected by homelessness. Work in this area will

continue throughout 2019/20 and beyond.

2019/20 will be another busy year. As a Council we will ensure that the requirements of the new Regulatory Framework introduced by the Scottish Housing Regulator are met.

We will continue to work with our tenant representatives to scrutinise service delivery and performance to improve the quality of our housing stock and the outcomes for tenants and other customers.

Housing Services Highlights 2018/19

During 2018/19 housing services have shared lot of highlights with tenants, applicants, services users and communities.

We will continue to work with our communities alongside other partners and agencies to ensure we deliver high quality of housing services.



Afternoon tea at Bradan Road, Sheltered Housing Unit



Ukulele Band Performance



New Properties at School Gardens, Ayr



Staff providing advice on National Housing Day.



The Google Bus



Residents of the Sheltered Housing Unit in Dundonald held a charity coffee morning



Children from Kingcase Nursery visited residents at Ardfin/Benmore Sheltered Housing Unit

This collection of photos highlights some of the good work that Housing Services, Involved Tenants and our communities have been involved in during 2018/19.

 Find us on
Facebook

**South Ayrshire Council
Housing Services**

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可按要求將本資訊翻譯成其他語言和轉變為其他格式。

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Na życzenie Klienta, informacje te mogą być udostępnione w innych językach oraz formatach.

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