

# Welcome to Falkirk Council’s Landlord Report

This report is to update you on how your Housing Service performed throughout 2021/22 as reported in our Scottish Housing Regulator Annual Charter return. Our tenant’s and resident’s groups have helped design the report, to show what is most important to them.

We have continued to make positive changes to our Housing Service. These changes include:

* Increasing the supply of affordable housing across the area.
* Developing our Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy.
* We provided laptops and digital support to vulnerable tenants through our Staying Connected Project.
* We are developing a Digital Housing Strategy.
* We are investing in our workforce through our Graduate and Modern Apprentice training programs.
* Maintaining our full ISO accreditation for the Housing Service.

We are making improvements to how we work digitally, so that we can make services more accessible to you, and have introduced a new Housing Management System. We will continue to invest in your home, with £179m of improvements set out in our Housing Investment Programme over 5 years.

This report covers the period April 2021 to March 2022. The Covid-19 pandemic presented significant challenges. The Scottish Housing Regulator acknowledges that whilst restrictions have lifted the effects of the pandemic continue to affect landlord performance across the housing sector. We have done all that we can to ensure our performance returns to pre-pandemic levels as quickly as possible.

To compare how we performed with other landlords across Scotland, view our Engagement Plan or Annual Assurance Statement or find out more about the Charter, you can visit the Scottish Housing Regulator’s website at [www.](http://www/)

scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk. We hope you find the information in the report useful. If you want to know more or become involved in helping us improve our service, you can email [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) or call us on 01324 506070.

We would like to thank all tenants and residents, whether you are involved in our groups or not, for your feedback and participation. By telling us what you think, this allows us to shape our service as it continues to change and improve.

Kenny Gillespie

Head of Housing & Communities

Housing Services | Transformation, Communities & Corporate Services

# Customer Landlord Relationship

## Indicator 1

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord

We are required by the Scottish Housing Regulator to carry out a large-scale survey at

least every three years. Our latest Tenant Satisfaction Survey was carried out in autumn/ winter 2021/22 . Independent research company, ‘Research Resource’ carried out the survey on our behalf. Following guidance issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator, they randomly selected a representative sample of 1000 of our tenants to be surveyed via

telephone, asking a variety of questions about the service. This information was collected during that survey.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 88.7% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 75.3% |
| 2020-21 | 91.8% |
| 2019-20 | 91.8% |

## Indicator 2

Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions

This information was collected via our latest Tenants Satisfaction Survey carried out

throughout the autumn/winter of 2021/22 and published in January. We have listened to what our tenants have told us about preferred methods of communication and made changes to reflect this. In response, we use personal letters where the information to be communicated is of a personal nature. Other, more general, information is published in

the tenants’ magazine, ‘Tenant Talk’ and/or available on the Falkirk Council website. The introduction of the new Housing Online portal this year, means that we will be able to tailor individual preferences for communication to each tenant.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 85.8% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 85.2% |
| 2020-21 | 95.2% |
| 2019-20 | 95.2% |

## Indicator 5

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in their landlord’s decision making processes

We were awarded the Tenants Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Gold standard

accreditation for our work involving our tenants in decision making. Our most recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey shows that most of our tenants are happy with the opportunities Falkirk Council’s Housing Service offer them to participate in decisions that affect them. We continue to promote all options for involvement and encourage tenants to give their views using a method they are comfortable with.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 86.8% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 98% |
| 2020-21 | 92.9% |
| 2019-20 | 92.9% |

# Our Properties And Rent

## Indicator C5

Rent increase to be applied next year

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 1.22% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 2.00% |
| 2020-21 | 3.00% |
| 2019-20 | 3.00% |

## Indicator C17

Stock by House Type, Apartment Sizes and Average Weekly Rents

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | House | High Rise | Tenement | Four in a Block | Other Flat/ Maisonette | Total |
| 1 Apartment | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 25 | 26 |
| 2 Apartment | 608 | 361 | 327 | 421 | 987 | 2711 |
| 3 Apartment | 2902 | 618 | 1637 | 2812 | 939 | 8928 |
| 4 Apartment | 3416 | 0 | 463 | 434 | 211 | 4494 |
| 5+ Apartment | 435 | 0 | 3 | 41 | 17 | 499 |
| Total | 7361 | 979 | 2431 | 3708 | 2179 | 16658 |

Number of apartments - the number of bedrooms and living spaces in a property. Does not include kitchens, bathrooms, or toilets. For example, a three apartment property will have two bedrooms and one living room.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Total Number of Lettable Units | Average Weekly Rent (calculated on  lettable units) | Scottish Average |
| 23 | 54.78 | 75.95 |
| 2613 | 61.54 | 81.32 |
| 8690 | 71.59 | 84.18 |
| 4444 | 80.09 | 91.48 |
| 496 | 91.74 | 100.74 |
| 16266 | 72.89 | 83.70 |

Lettable units - those that are able to be used for tenancies, e.g. not being used for temporary accommodation, or held empty for demolition

# Housing Quality And Maintenance

## Indicator 6

Percentage of properties meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) at the reporting year end

We have fewer properties meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) this

year. Restrictions put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic and legislative changes including moving from a a five to ten year test cycle for electrical testing prevented us from accessing and conducting many of our planned improvement measures. During the pandemic only essential emergency work could be carried out. The reduction in the number of properties not meeting the SHQS mostly relates to those where electrical checks could not be carried out. We have now recommenced our programme of planned maintenance measures and electrical safety checks. We have a five-year investment programme in place to ensure our stock is maintained to SHQS. A total budget of c£179m has been approved to ensure our stock meets the standards set out in SHQS and EESSH.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 74.6% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 59.9% |
| 2020-21 | 90.0% |
| 2019-20 | 97.7% |

## Indicator 7

Percentage of existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home

This indicator was last surveyed in our Tenants Satisfaction Survey which was carrried out in Autumn/Winter 2021/22 and published in January. We continue to invest in tenants homes, with a £180 million capital investment programme in place for the next five years.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 85.4% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 77.0% |
| 2020-21 | 93.5% |
| 2019-20 | 93.5% |

## Indicator 8

Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)

The average time to complete emergency repairs has been affected by the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic Covid-safe working practices and social distancing meant that emergency repairs took longer to complete than previously.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 4.2 hours |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 4.59 hours |
| 2020-21 | 5.03 hours |
| 2019-20 | 3.36 hours |

## Indicator 9

Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days) During the Covid-19 Pandemic non-emergency repairs reporting continued but we were unable to carry out non-emergency works due to lockdown restrictions. This created

a backlog of repairs jobs as only emergency repairs were carried out for much of the previous year. We have commenced a programme to progress the backlog, which is being progressed on a priority basis, reflecting the time a repair has been outstanding and the priority and nature of the required work. We have sourced additional trades resources to help address the backlog and reduce completion timescales.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 8.9 days |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 16.99 days |
| 2020-21 | 13.88 days |
| 2019-20 | 5.55 days |

## Indicator 11

Percentage of tenants who have had repairs carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service

The number of repairs satisfaction survey completed throughout the year has increased

as we have now resumed a full repairs and maintenance service. Although levels of satisfaction with the service have reduced slightly in the past year. We are pleased to report that levels of satisfaction with the overall repairs service remain high.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 88% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 92.44% |
| 2020-21 | 93.7% |
| 2019-20 | 95.6% |

# Neighbourhood & Community

## Indicator 3

Percentage of all complaints responded to in full at Stage 1

Whilst it has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, our performance in responding to complaints has improved in comparison to the previous year. We value complaints and the vital feedback they provide us about our services and continue to monitor performance and use customer feedback to help us deliver continuous improvement in services.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 96.9% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 93.2% |
| 2020-21 | 90.6% |
| 2019-20 | 94.8 |

## Indicator 3

Percentage of all complaints responded to in full at Stage 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 93.8% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 84.3% |
| 2020-21 | 81.8% |
| 2019-20 | 88.1% |

## Indicator 4

The average time in working days for a full reponse at Stage 1 (complaints)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 5.8 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 4.8 |
| 2020-21 | 4.9 |
| 2019-20 | 4.1 |

## Indicator 4

The average time in working days for a full reponse at Stage 2 (complaints)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 27.4 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 20.7 |
| 2020-21 | 23.3 |
| 2019-20 | 18.7 |

## Indicator 13

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the contribution to the management of the neighbourhood that they live in

The percentage of tenants satisfied with contribution to the management of the

neighbourhood that they live in has reduced following our latest Tenant Satisfaction survey. Our Housing Operations staff are working in a more flexible manner to make them more visible and approachable in our communities. We will continue to utilise customer feedback as a continuous driver for service improvement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 85.1% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 84.0% |
| 2020-21 | 94.3% |
| 2019-20 | 94.3% |

## Indicator 14

Percentage of tenancy offers refused during the year

Our Allocations changed in October 2020, to ensure those in the most housing need are able to secure housing as quickly as possible. The changes help applicants make more informed choices when bidding on properties. There are a number of reasons why a property may be refused and we monitor the reasons a property is refused which helps us gain an in-depth picture of why refusals occur and helps us reduce the number of refusals. As a result the number of tenancy offers refused has reduced in comparison to the previous year.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 32.9% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 33.2% |
| 2020-21 | 34.5% |
| 2019-20 | 34.6% |

## Indicator 15

Percentage of antisocial behaviour cases reported in the last year which were resolved

Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) increased significantly during the pandemic and

have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Our Conflict Resolution Service is still experiencing a significantly higher number of reports of alleged ASB and neighbour nuisance. A high portion of cases reported involve low level neighbour nuisance /ASB which can be difficult to resolve and manage customer expectations. We have continued to look at adapting and adopting different measures to ensure we maintain an effective service and have increased face to face contact with our tenants and increased staffing to cope with demand.

## Indicator 22

Percentage of the court actions initiated which resulted in eviction

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and Scottish Government legislation which has prevented landlords evicting tenants, there have been no court actions raised during 2021/22. We will continue our efforts to manage our arrears cases effectively.

# Access To Housing And Support

## Indicator 16

Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year

Our approach to tenancy sustainment is based on building positive relationships with tenants. To support tenants at the crucial early stages of their tenancy we have improved the information provided at the pre offer of tenancy stage, we are currently working with the homeless team to review this crucial intervention to ensure the best possible start

for a tenancy. We continue to support tenants through our programme of annual tenant visits. We have a formal group of Finance, Housing and Support staff who meet regularly to review our practice to ensure we support tenants and enable them to access other council services. .

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 90.7% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 94.5% |
| 2020-21 | 92.9% |
| 2019-20 | 90.4% |

## Indicator 17

Percentage of lettable houses that became vacant during the year

The percentage of lettable houses has fallen slightly this year. However, this is due to the effective interventions of Housing Operations Housing Needs and Finance assisting tenants to retain their tenancies, through support or financial assistance.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 7.6% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 6.5% |
| 2020-21 | 6.7% |
| 2019-20 | 7.6% |

## Indicator 19

Number of households currently waiting for adaptations to their home

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 28.8 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 268 |
| 2020-21 | 202 |
| 2019-20 | 205 |

## Indicator 20

Total cost of adaptations completed in the year

The amount spent on adaptions increased this year, as we return to normal practices following the Covid-19 Pandemic it is anticipated this will return to pre-pandemic levels of spending.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | £209,605 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | £768,204 |
| 2020-21 | £432,908 |
| 2019-20 | £126,5733 |

## Indicator 21

The average time to complete adaptations (days)

Adaption and assessment work was significantly affected by the restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-safe working guidance meant that only essential assessments and urgent adaption work to support hospital discharges was carried out during the pandemic. Now that restrictions have been lifted normal service has restarted. We

are carrying out more assessments and completing a higher number of adaptions to properties. As a result the average time to complete adaption work has increased during 21/22.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 54.3 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 67.0 |
| 2020-21 | 62.6 |
| 2019-20 | 32.0 |

## Indicator 30

Average time to re-let properties

Restrictions put in place during the covid pandemic affected how quickly we were able to re-let properties, as this restricted the number of trades undertaking work within

a property at the same time. This resulted in a longer void turn-over and backlog of properties that required work. We have employed additional resources to tackle the backlog and longer void turnover. We continue to monitor voids so that they are prioritised for those who are in greatest need and have implemented processes to improve relet timescales and minimise rent loss.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 51.6 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 77.0 |
| 2020-21 | 66.8 |
| 2019-20 | 41.2 |

# Getting Good Value From Rents And Service Charges

## Indicator 26

Rent collected as percentage of total rent due in the reporting year

During 2020/21 there was a national downturn in social landlord rent collection which has continued into 21/22. Our performance reflects this national downturn and is mostly caused by the restrictions which were put in place to halt the normal recovery process.

We continue to monitor our rental collection levels and expect this position to improve over the coming year. Reducing rent arrears is a priority for our Housing Officers and they regularly engage with tenants to provide support and assistance to reduce arrears and maximise household income.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 99.3% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 98.19% |
| 2020-21 | 97.15% |
| 2019-20 | 100.10% |

## Indicator 18

Percentage of rent lost through homes being empty during the last year Increased rent loss through homes being empty reflects the average times to re-let properties increasing as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 1.4% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 2.26% |
| 2020-21 | 1.58% |
| 2019-20 | 1.31% |

## Indicator 25

Percentage of tenants who feel that the rent for their property represents good value for money

We asked this question via our large-scale Tenants satisfaction Survey which was carried

out in Autumn/Winter 2021/22. The percentage of tenants who feel that their rent represents good value for money has decreased. We are currently looking a more ways to communicate with our tenants about rent affordability and value for money. Our rents continue to be set a one of the lowest rates for a social landlord in Scotland.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 82.5% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 76.6% |
| 2020-21 | 85.4% |
| 2019-20 | 85.4% |

# Other Customers

## Indicator 31

Average weekly rent per pitch

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | £75.97 |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | £88.76 |
| 2020-21 | £87.08 |
| 2019-20 | £86.19 |

## Indicator 32

Satisfaction with management of site

We are pleased that we continue to have 100% satisfaction with our services from our site residents. We have continued to provide on-site support and management through various levels of Covid-19 restrictions. Scottish Government provided a grant of

£70,000 for upgrading of the site, and we have consulted with our residents to bring in improvements that are important to them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Scottish Average | |
| 2021-22 | 77.98% |
| Falkirk Council | |
| 2021-22 | 100.0% |
| 2020-21 | 100.0% |
| 2019-20 | 100.0% |

# Tenant Feedback Contact Details

## Falkirk Council Community Engagement Team

The Forum, Callendar Business Park, Falkirk FK1 1XR Tel: 01324 590796

Email: [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk)

Web: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property/council-housing/customer-](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property/council-housing/customer-) involvement/how-to-get-involved.aspx

## Scottish Housing Regulator

Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF Tel: 0141 242 5642

Email: [shr@shr.gov.scot](mailto:shr@shr.gov.scot)

You can compare Falkirk Council’s performance with other social landlords across Scotland, view our Engagement Plan, and learn more about the Charter by visiting the Scottish Housing Regulator’s website at [www.housingregulator.gov.scot](http://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/)

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, LARGE PRINT or audio tape, please call us on 01324 590796, or email tenant.participation@falkirk. gov.uk

# How can you get involved?

With your involvement, you will be able to tell us what you think about the services we provide, make suggestions on how we could do better, and check out how we are performing.

There are many ways that you can get involved and help Housing Services to keep you informed. These include:

* Online meetings, forums, surveys etc.
* Tenants’ & Residents’ Forum
* Open Days
* Questionnaires & Surveys
* Comment Cards
* Consultation Register
* Customer Scrutiny Panel
* Tenant Choices Award Scheme
* Housing Asset Management Plan Group
* How Your Rent Money is Spent Group
* Registered Tenants’ & Residents’ Organisations
* Editorial Panel
* Estate Walkabouts

We want to keep in touch with you, and for you to be able to keep in touch with us, whilst some Covid19 restrictions are in place. If you would like to be involved using social media, please contact the Community Engagement Team on 01324 590796 or by email at [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk)

