



Hebridean
Housing
Partnership

Tenant Report 2013/14

How we are doing



Performance ♦ Information ♦ Results ♦ Comparisons

A note from the Chair...

This is HHP's first Tenant Report, created with tenants' input, and giving an overview of how HHP has performed over the past year against the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes, which were introduced by the Scottish Government in April 2012.



A requirement of the Charter is that landlords report their performance back to tenants by the end of October of each year, for the previous reporting year, and also that tenants have input into the content and design of the report. HHP has, therefore, consulted with tenants electronically via our website, individually with tenants visiting HHP premises, and also with tenants' and residents' bodies.

We are very grateful for the help, support and encouragement we have received from our tenants and, while performance is good we are aware that we have some tenant satisfaction issues to work on. We hope we can improve this report next year, with performance that is above the Scottish average.

David Blaney, HHP Chair

We have compared our performance throughout this report to the Scottish average and other housing associations within our peer group, which should give you an indication of how we are performing. Our peer group is:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Abertay Housing Association Ltd | Almond Housing Association |
| Argyll Community Housing Association | Atrium Homes |
| Berwickshire Housing Association Ltd | Clyde Valley Housing Association Ltd |
| Cube housing Association Ltd | Cumbernauld Housing Partnership Ltd |
| Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership | Fife Housing Association Ltd |
| Glen Oaks Housing Association Ltd | Irvine Housing Association Ltd |
| Knowes Housing Association Ltd | Linstone Housing Association Ltd |
| Melville Housing Association Ltd | Paragon Housing Association Ltd |
| River Clyde Homes Ltd | Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association |
| Scottish Borders Housing Association Ltd | Shire Housing Association Ltd |
| Thenue Housing Association Ltd | Waverly Housing |
| Weslo Housing Management | |

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Table Key

We have used an easy-to-follow key which tells you HHP’s performance, the Scottish average, as well as the lowest, highest and average performance in our peer group, as follows.

		Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
HHP	Scottish Average	Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest

1 Outcome 1: Equalities

Accessibility

We want you to have your needs recognised. Both our offices are wheelchair accessible and we are signed up to Language Line translation service.

Adapting Homes

In the Western Isles we have an ageing population but we aim to support our tenants to enable you to remain in your homes for as long as possible. We work closely with the Occupational Therapy Service in order to adapt properties to the standards that you need as you age.

Demographics

We record the demographics of current tenants, new tenants and applicants. This helps to make us more responsive to particular needs, for example when disabilities are identified, and it also helps to shape both our development and investment programmes.



You have given us the following information to date:

	Tenants	Applicants	New Tenants
White Scottish	82.85%	81.98%	80.87%
White British	11.04%	12.91%	12.57%
Gypsy/Traveller	0.36%	1.05%	0.55%
Irish	0.09%	0.30%	0.00%
Polish	0.45%	1.05%	0.00%
Other White	3.50%	2.70%	5.46%
Mixed Ethnic	0.27%	0.00%	0.55%
Scottish/British Asian	0.63%	0.00%	0.00%
Pakistani	0.09%	0.00%	0.00%
Chinese	0.09%	0.00%	0.00%
Other Asian	0.45%	0.00%	0.00%
Black Scottish/British	0.09%	0.00%	0.00%
African	0.09%	0.00%	0.00%

2 Outcome 2: Communication

Contacting Us

We aim to make getting in touch with us easy and cost effective. We have a Customer Service team of 4 who are happy to take your calls and who will try to resolve issues for you as quickly as possible. There are various methods you can use to contact us: phone call, letter, email, or visit our offices. Our Housing Officers often carry out visits and we are happy for you to come to our offices for assistance. Below is the feedback you gave us on communications for 2013/14:



Communication			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
% satisfaction with opportunities to participate	63%	63%	76%	94%	59%
% satisfaction with keeping tenants informed	75%	89%	87%	98%	73%

Following feedback from surveys we are introducing a new Tenant Participation Development Service to increase opportunities for you to participate in decision-making, and to improve communication. We also propose to increase the number of newsletters we issue from 2 to 3 a year and will review the information we provide in these.

Complaints

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service we have a formal complaints procedure developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and we encourage you to use it. Complaints give us valuable information that we can use to improve customer satisfaction, and resolving complaints early saves you money and creates better customer relations. You can find our complaints procedure on our website at www.hebrideanhousing.co.uk. We can also provide you with hard copies if you wish. Every quarter we publish complaints received and the outcomes of these complaints, in our offices and on our website.

In 2013/14 the following complaints were made, upheld by HHP, and responded to:

Complaints			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Total number of complaints	65	144	187	806	4
% of all cases upheld	43%	45%	61%	80%	37%
% of all cases responded to within timescales	61%	80%	82%	100%	49%

3 Outcome 3: Participation

Placing our tenants at the centre of what we do is a key objective for HHP. We continue to work closely with Western Isles Forum of Tenants and Residents Associations (WIFTRA) and to provide opportunities for you to engage with us.

We hosted events for tenants during the year in Stornoway, Tarbert, Balivanich and Barra. and we welcome your continued presence at Board Meetings—our calendar is set at our AGM for the following year, and dates for 2015 are on our website.

We arranged a conference in May 2013 which looked at how we could tackle the changes we are facing in Housing, such as welfare reform. This was well attended by tenant groups and those working in the Housing environment.



We also continued to seek tenants views on our services, such as repairs, investment works and re-letting, via satisfaction surveys after works have been completed, and used the feedback to improve how we do things. We have also consulted with you on various aspects of our work, with the last consultation being Anti-Social Behaviour resolution timescales, and we used that feedback to set these timescales.

Tenants and the public are welcome at our Board Meetings and our AGM and although we have a small number of regular attenders, we would welcome the attendance of many more so you can have a better insight into how we operate.

If you are interested in the Governance of HHP, you can become a member of the Partnership. If you are a tenant you can stand for election onto our Board as a Tenant member. If you are not a tenant, you can also become a member and stand for election as a Community member.

There is a form at Section 13—Getting Involved, which you can fill in and return to us, if you wish to increase your involvement with the Partnership in any way.

4 Outcome 4: Quality of Housing

SHQS

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) was introduced by the Scottish Government in 2004 in order to bring social housing in Scotland to a nationally agreed standard. One of HHP's most important aims is to meet the SHQS by 2015. Currently 80.3% of our stock meets the standard. There are some older properties for which we will seek exemptions from the Standard owing to, for example, small or awkwardly shaped kitchens. We are working towards achieving the Standard for the rest through our Investment Programme, and are on track to achieve this. Comparisons are below.

Housing Quality & Maintenance			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
% meeting SHQS	80.3%	85.4%	81.8%	100%	32.97%

Satisfaction with Quality of Housing

69.2% of tenants who moved in the last 12 months, responded that you were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the quality of your home when you moved into it.

Satisfaction with Quality of Home			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Satisfied with standard of home when moving in	69.2%	83.4%	74.5%	100%	58.3%

We will carry out further work to see how we can improve this figure and the standard of houses at re-let.

5 Outcome 5: Repairs, Maintenance & Improvements

Planned & Cyclical Maintenance



Our Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Programme continued throughout the year and it seeks to ensure tenant safety, in addition to maximising the lifespan of HHP's houses. The cyclical element covers servicing to gas and air source heating, fire alarm and door entry systems, and this year we also introduced a chimney cleaning service in properties with open fires.

We completed year 4 of our 5 year planned maintenance programme with priorities including roofing and roughcast repairs, gutter cleaning and repairs, and also pathway repairs.

Repair and maintenance performance is detailed below.

100% of properties with mains gas were serviced in 2013/14 by a qualified engineer

over £500K was spent on planned maintenance in 2013/14

Repairs			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Satisfaction with repairs service	72%	88%	84%	97%	72%
Average time (hours) taken to complete emergency repairs	7.9	6.9	3.6	0.65	11.54
Average time (days) taken to complete non-emergency repairs	5.7	8.2	6.3	2.8	11.5
% of reactive repairs completed right first time	92%	87%	89%	99%	79%
% of repairs appointments kept	85%	93%	94%	100%	84%

Repairs

Satisfaction with our repairs service is lower than Scottish and peer averages, but our performance on non-emergency repairs, and also the time taken to complete reactive repairs, is actually better than both.

In respect of emergency repairs, we aim to respond to them within either 4 or 24 hours depending on the nature of the repair. Despite our geographical location and the difficulties our contractor sometimes experiences in sourcing non-standard replacement parts within the target time, we are fairly close to the Scottish average.

Repairs appointments were, however, lower than both Scottish and peer averages.

Investment Programme

HHP's Investment Programme improves your homes and make them better places to live. In 2013/14 works carried out included:

- 121 heating systems installed;
- 79 bathrooms installed;
- 92 kitchens installed;
- 26 properties re-roofed; and
- 128 properties received new windows.



over £3 million
spent on
improvements
to your homes
in 2013/14

Community Benefit

We worked with our contractors to maximise our contribution to the wider community, for example, our contractors provided fencing materials for Newmarket play area, the old windows that were removed during the window replacement contract were sold and the money raised was given to Bethesda, and seating was provided at MacKenzie Park.

We also supported several local charities including the Eilean Siar Foodbank, Western Isles Kidney Patient Association, Cobhair Bharraigh, and Caraidean Uibhist, who received a donation of £500 each.

Apprenticeships

We are committed to creating opportunities for young people and to help them gain employment. Through our contractors we have provided:

- 6 apprenticeships via FES FM on our Repair & Maintenance contract; and
- 5 apprenticeships via Calmax Ltd on our new build programme.

We also supported 2 student placements over the summer and continue to offer placements to school pupils.

6 Outcome 6: Estate Management etc.

Estate Management

We have a number of housing estates spread throughout the Western Isles, though the majority of our houses are in and around Stornoway. Our Area Teams monitor the way our estates look, for example, whether gardens or communal areas are overgrown, and deal with anti-social behaviour in conjunction with the Comhairle's Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, the local Police, and the handyman service.


Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

In the Western Isles we are fortunate not to have the amount of anti-social behaviour cases reported by other local authority areas. We had 1.8 cases, per 100 houses, which is considerably lower than the peer group average.

We consulted with tenants and other bodies regarding setting up locally agreed timescales and these were set as follows:

- Serious - initial response within 24 hours with resolution in 3 months or legal action to be initiated; and
- Less serious - initial response within 5 days with resolution in 3 months.

We closed 50% of the ASB cases that we saw in 2013/14 within the above timescales. We tend to keep cases open for longer than our peers as we continue to monitor ASB cases for up to six months after they have been 'resolved'.

Anti-Social Behaviour			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Number of cases of anti-social behaviour reported per 100 homes	1.8	no average	7.37	36.26	0.5
% of ASB cases resolved within locally agreed timescales	50%	75.9%	75.8%	103.5%	11.3%

Best Estates/Street

We run annual competitions for 'best estate' and 'best street' and in 2013/14 the winners were:

- Graham Park for best estate; and
- Queensland Road for best street.

7 Outcome 7, 8 & 9: Housing Options

Allocations

In 2013/14 there were 191 general needs lets which are made up of the following:

- 27 relets to existing tenants;
- 100 lets to Housing List applicants; and
- 65 nominated from the Comhairle Homeless Service.

Mutual Exchanges

With a high demand for social housing in the Western Isles but a lack of properties available, mutual exchanges are becoming a more common way for tenants to move to a property that is better suited to their needs. In 2013/14 we received 11 applications for mutual exchanges between our tenants and approved 1 of them. Sometimes, these applications can be refused, however, if for example:

- the condition of one (or both) of the properties was unacceptable;
- an applicant had rent arrears; or
- either property is of an unsuitable size.

Mortgage to Rent

We understand that current financial pressures can make it difficult to meet mortgage repayments so we are willing to consider Mortgage to Rent applications from former tenants who have purchased their property via Right to Buy, but are now at risk of losing their home. These are considered on an individual basis.

Accessing Information on Housing

Our staff can give information and advice and we aim to provide it in the format that is best for you, whether on our website www.hebrideanhousing.co.uk, in print, or by telephone.

Our Housing Services Team have also attended several training sessions on the welfare changes that we continue to experience, and also on homelessness, so they are well placed to advise you if you are in danger of losing your home, and on prevention of homelessness. You can call them, or ask them to call you back at any time. Contact details can be found in Section 14—Good To Know.

8 Outcome 10: Access to Social Housing

Types of Housing

The table below outlines the homes we have available for rent.

Stock	House	High Rise	Tenement	4 in a Block	Other flat/ maisonette	Total
1 apt	4	0	1	0	0	5
2 apt	436	0	154	21	29	640
3 apt	641	0	129	11	22	803
4 apt	682	0	2	16	2	702
5 apt	67	0	0	0	2	69
Total	1830	0	286	48	55	2219

Of these, there are:



Access to an HHP Property

The most common routes to an HHP tenancy is by submitting an application for housing directly to HHP, or via a nomination from the Comhairle's Homeless Service. We also support Foyer and Crossreach in transition to independent living.

Housing Lists

At the end of 2013/14 our Housing List looked like this:

- 729 applicants in total (this includes transfer applicants);
- 485 new applicants added over the year;
- 28 suspended* from the list;
- 300 applications cancelled; and
- 202 applicants were housed.

With this information available to us, in conjunction with CNES and with support from the Scottish Government, we can create a Development Programme that suits the needs of the changing population of the Western Isles.

*Reasons can include: arrears, poor tenancy reference, refusal of 2 reasonable offers, or applicant request.

9 Outcome 11: Tenancy Sustainment

Information & advice

It is in everyone's best interests to help tenants to remain in their homes. HHP staff are able to provide advice whether it is assisting you to apply for benefits, liaising with support agencies regarding adaptations that may be required, or directing you to other support agencies that may be better placed and informed to give you the advice you need.

Money Issues

Since the welfare changes came into existence, it has been imperative to ensure that our tenants receive advice on paying rent, particularly when they are affected by "bedroom tax" regulations. Our Housing Officers have been able to liaise with Housing Benefit to check eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), and also to help ensure that you receive all the financial aid you are entitled to. As a result of this, and despite some tenants accruing arrears because of the "bedroom tax", our rent arrears have been better than any period since transfer.

209 tenants affected by bedroom tax

We helped 160 tenants helped to claim DHP

Tenancy Sustainment



90% of new tenancies started in 2013/14 were still in their homes after 1 year. This is marginally higher than peer and Scottish averages. There were 4 tenancies abandoned during the year.

Tenancy Sustainment			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
% of new tenancies sustained for more than one year	90%	87.8%	88.2%	96.3%	73.2%

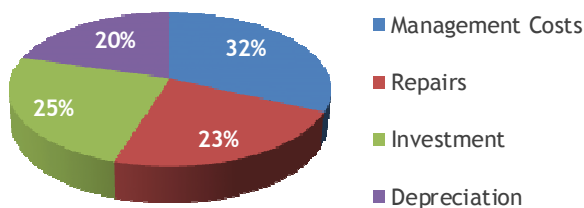
10 Outcome 13: Value for Money

Financial Overview

The total rent due to HHP for 2013/14 was £7,701,081. Rent arrears for the year amounted to £358,379 or 4.63%, which was lower than both Scottish and peer average. Percentage of rent collected was also significantly better than both averages.



Value for Money			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
% of tenants who feel their rent represented good VFM	70.7%	76.4%	70.4%	85.7%	53%
% of total rent due collected in the previous year	100.1%	99%	98.9%	103.1%	95.8%
Gross rent arrears as a % of rent due	4.6%	5.1%	5.1%	0.6%	10.5%

This is how your rent is spent:



Empty Properties (Voids)



It took HHP on average 23 days to re-let properties. This is, once again, considerably better performance than both Scottish and peer averages, especially given the geographical challenges. HHP staff work closely with our contractor, FES FM Ltd, to ensure properties are re-let as quickly as possible. As a result void loss (rent that we lose because a property is empty) is kept low.

Voids			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Average time in days to relet properties	22.9	35.7	34.3	6.2	132.7
% of rent due not collected through homes being empty	0.6%	1.2%	1.2%	4.6%	0.2%



11 Outcome 14 & 15: Rents & Service Charges

Rent Increase

In 2013/14, following consultation, you agreed to a 3.6% rent increase in the next financial year. This was fairly standard across Scotland and across our comparison group, with the highest rent increase being 4.6%.

Rent Increase			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Rent increase to be applied in the next reporting year	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%	4.6%	2.2%

The average weekly rent you pay, depending on the size of your property, is as follows:

Average Weekly Rent			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
1 apartment	£63.24	£59.56	£38.99	£74.38	£44.71
2 apartment	£61.30	£65.18	£64.63	£82.55	£56.94
3 apartment	£66.63	£67.19	£70.44	£81.92	£64.00
4 apartment	£71.69	£73.07	£77.42	£87.48	£69.21
5 apartment	££78.17	£81.68	£87.33	£103.32	£75.34

For 2, 3, 4 and 5 apartment properties HHP rents are lower than both Scottish and peer averages. In addition, factoring fees are also lower than both, as demonstrated below.

Management Fee			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
Average annual management fee per factored property	£30.00	£83.59	£62.59	£216.11	£0.16

12 Satisfaction & Improving Satisfaction

Satisfaction Indicators & Comparisons

Of all the tenants who responded to our Tenant Satisfaction Survey, 73% of you told us that you were 'satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the overall service we give you, and 16.3% were dissatisfied. The comparisons are below:

Satisfaction with Overall Service			Peer Average	Peer Highest	Peer Lowest
% satisfaction with overall service	73%	87.8%	85.8%	94.9%	13.6%

We thought it was worth detailing the results in full for this part of the Survey, as follows:

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord	
Number of tenants who were surveyed and responded:	863
very satisfied	255
fairly satisfied	366
neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	91
fairly dissatisfied	70
very dissatisfied	67
no opinion	4

While almost three quarters of you are happy with the service we provide, there is room for improvement. The following page gives you some idea of what we have put in place to improve tenant satisfaction with the services we provide.

Improving Satisfaction

Here are some of the measures we have put in place to help improve tenant satisfaction:

- Increased monitoring of repairs after HHP has reported the repair to FES;
- Increased monitoring of customer satisfaction with reactive repairs;
- Improved communication with tenants receiving investment prior to work commencing, and after work is completed;
- Reviewed telephone system and answering system;
- Increased support and advice to new tenants when moving in;
- Improved information on how to best use heating systems;
- Increased use of texting and social media;
- Improved help and advice to tenants on dealing with condensation; and
- Automatic acknowledgement of all emails sent to Customer Services inbox

Contact Details

Creed Court
Gleann Seileach Business Park
Willowglen
Stornoway
HS1 2QP

Winfield Way
Balivanich
Isle of Benbecula
HS7 5LH

Our phone number: 0300 123 0773

Our general email address: info@hebrideanhousing.co.uk

Executive Team

Chief Executive: Angus Lamont Director of Resources: Dena MacLeod
Director of Operations: John MacIver

Board Members

Our Board is divided into Tenant, Community and Council Members, and we also have a Co-opted Member, as follows:

David Blaney, Chair (Council)	Donald J MacRae (Council)
Norman M MacLeod (Council)	Gordon Murray (Council)
George Lonie, Vice-Chair (Community)	Mairi Bremner (Community)
Jane MacKinnon (Community)	Calum MacKay (Community)
Alasdair MacKenzie (Tenant)	Daniel Coyle (Tenant)
Kevin P Paterson (Tenant)	Iain MacMillan (Co-optee)

Tenant and Residents' Groups

Western Isles Forum of Tenants and Residents Associations (WIFTRA)
C/O Kevin P Paterson, by post to HHP Stornoway; Email: chair@wiftra.org

Cearns Community Association

C/O Calum MacKay, Cearns Community Association, Cearns Resource Centre, Stornoway, HS1 2YN ; Phone: 01851 702 794; Email: cearnsbarney@aol.com

Balivanich Tenants' and Residents' Association

C/O Mr Roddy MacKay, 17 Tindill Road, Balivanich, Benbecula, HS7 5LF;
Phone: 01870 602820

Registered Charity No : SC035767

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