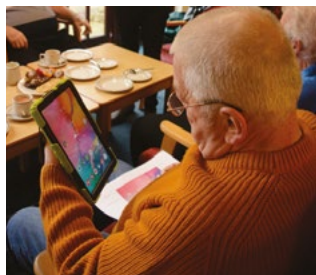




# ANNUAL CHARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT **2020-2021**





## About This Report - How Do We Compare?

The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes expected of registered social landlords (RSLs). Each RSL submits an Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). The SHR calculates the Scottish Average, which gives a benchmark for comparison. We also compare our performance against previous years. In addition, we conduct a tenant satisfaction survey every 3 years. Our most recent survey was carried out in 2020.

### The traffic light system

The traffic light faces are to help provide an easy and clear indication of our level of performance.



**Green** indicates that our performance is better than the Scottish Registered Social Landlord (RSL) average.



**Amber** indicates that performance is on a par with the RSL average.



**Red** indicates that performance is not as good as the RSL average and where improvement is needed.

### Our Staff

In line with data submitted to the ARC, we have 72.64 FTE (full-time equivalent) staff posts. Staff are based across our Carden and Waverley Place offices, our sheltered schemes in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, and our housing for older people in Moray. Turnover was 7.87%.

# WELCOME TO THE CASTLEHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CHARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020 – 2021

## Letter from our Convener

Our Annual Charter Performance Report 2020-2021 helps us keep tenants up to date with how we are performing in comparison with similar housing associations across Scotland. While the circumstances of the past year have inevitably affected our service delivery, our staff have continued to respond and adapt remarkably well. The Management Committee has been hugely impressed with all that the Association has continued to achieve in these unprecedented times. Throughout this period, we have been working to public health advice, government and regulatory guidance, with the aim to ensure that our staff and tenants remained safe whilst continuing to deliver the maximum services we could within these guidelines. This has impacted upon our performance this year.

Specifically, we have been unable to carry out our planned maintenance upgrades of kitchens and bathrooms and at certain times of the year were restricted to emergency repairs only. As restrictions eased our Property Services Team have been dealing with a significant backlog of day-to-day repairs, ensuring these are addressed as quickly as possible. This year, Property Services has also implemented new gardening service and a new reactive repairs framework with several contractors appointed to different locations of our housing stock. This followed a competitive tendering exercise to ensure value for money for our tenants while continuing to support employment in locally based firms.

Our Housing Services Team conducted well-being checks on most of our tenants during lockdown and have done a great job in keeping our rent arrears under control despite the pressures on household finances and in assisting tenants to access any help they need with paying their rent. We also used this as an opportunity to update our housing records with electronic contact details. The Association hopes to push ahead with a more robust digital approach to keep our tenants informed in the future, as we have learnt that in such times, it's an invaluable way to keep everyone informed and up to date.

Our new housing development programme was subject to some delays as construction sites were shut down, but our new properties in Banff were handed over in January, including 5 properties leased to our subsidiary, Castlehill Housing Trust, as specialist supported homes. We currently have developments on site in Kintore and Inch that we hope to complete in January 2022 and May 2022 respectively.

I hope that you will find this year's Charter Performance Report to be informative and of interest.

**Janice Lyon**

Convenor of Management Committee



## OUR PROFILE

2018/19

Total number of houses



Total rent due

**£8,552,157**

Percentage average weekly rent increase applied

**3.9%**

2019/20

Total number of houses



Total rent due

**£9,057,698**

Percentage average weekly rent increase applied

**2.7%**

2020/21

Total number of houses



Total rent due





**£9,277,000**

Percentage average weekly rent increase applied

**0.7%**

The average rent increase across all Registered Social Landlords in Scotland this year was

**1.7%**

Number of Bedrooms	Number in Stock	Average Weekly Rent	Scottish Average
<b>Studios</b>	<b>84</b>	£64.50	£73.61
 x 1	<b>960</b>	£82.57	£79.48
 x 2	<b>557</b>	£94.36	£82.60
 x 3	<b>240</b>	£106.01	£89.81
 x 4	<b>33</b>	£117.88	£99.97

Our average weekly rent includes service charges, across general needs, sheltered and very sheltered homes. Charges are higher in supported accommodation and as our stock includes all types of properties this shows in our weekly cost. Not all Registered Scottish Landlords include service charges in their weekly rent calculation and not all have supported accommodation, which makes comparison harder between our costs and national average.

# TENANT PARTICIPATION & SATISFACTION

Percentage of tenants satisfied with overall service



2020/2021

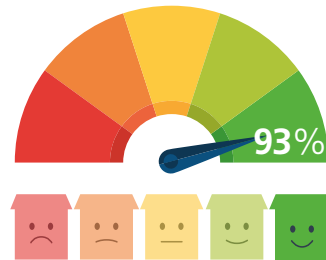


Scottish Average

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

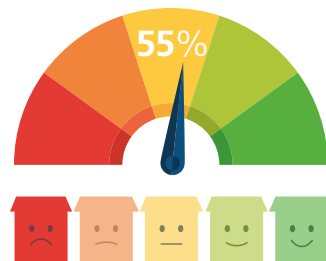


2020/2021

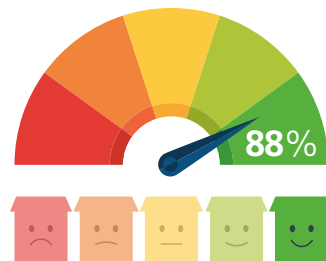


Scottish Average

Percentage of tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in their landlord's decision making processes



2020/2021



Scottish Average

## Property Services

2020-21 was a challenging time because of the restrictions, shortages and limitations we all faced due to the pandemic. However, a positive outcome was that we have pushed to digitalise and streamline processes to deliver services remotely and efficiently.

Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs

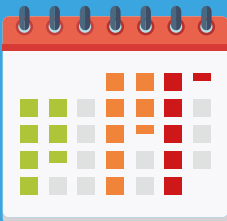


**3 hours 20 mins**  
**2020/2021**

**3 hours 45 mins**  
2019/2020

**3 hours 20 mins**  
Scottish Average

Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs



**6.1 days**  
**2020/2021**

**7 days**  
2019/2020

**6.3 days**  
Scottish Average

Percentage of reactive repairs carried out completed first time

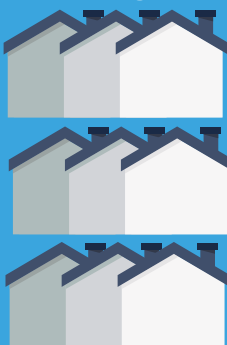


**88%**  
**2020/2021**

**90%**  
2019/2020

**90%**  
Scottish Average

Percentage of stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard



**99%**  
**2020/2021**

**99%**  
2019/2020

**92%**  
Scottish Average

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



**80%**  
**2020/2021**

**80%**  
2019/2020

**90%**  
Scottish Average

## NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY

Number of cases of  
anti social behaviour  
reported



**223**  
**2020/2021**

**123**  
2019/2020

Percentage of cases  
resolved within  
locally agreed  
targets



**66%**  
**2020/2021**

**79%**  
2019/2020

**96%**  
Scottish Average



## GETTING GOOD VALUE FOR RENTS & SERVICE CHARGES

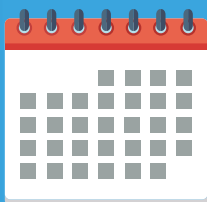
Average length of  
time taken to re-let  
properties



**75 days**  
**2020/2021**

**32 days**  
2019/2020

**53 days**  
Scottish Average



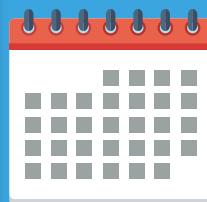
Percentage of rent  
lost through properties  
being empty



**3.5%**  
**2020/2021**

**1.8%**  
2019/2020

**1.4%**  
Scottish Average



### Percentage of total rent due collected



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>99%</b>
2019/2020	<b>100%</b>
Scottish Average	<b>99%</b>

### Court Actions initiated



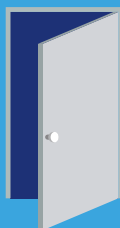
<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>6</b>
2019/2020	<b>14</b>

### Court Actions initiated which resulted in eviction due to non payment of rent



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>0</b>
2019/2020	<b>2</b>

### Number of abandonments



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>3</b>
2019/2020	<b>5</b>

### Percentage of gross rent arrears



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
2019/2020	<b>3.8%</b>
Scottish Average	<b>4.3%</b>

### Number of mutual exchanges



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>15</b>
2019/2020	<b>19</b>

### Percentage of lettable homes that become vacant



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
2019/2020	<b>13%</b>
Scottish Average	<b>7.2%</b>

### Percentage of tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in



<b>2020/2021</b>	<b>82%</b>
2019/2020	<b>82%</b>
Scottish Average	<b>88%</b>



# LEARNING FROM THE PANDEMIC

Castlehill acknowledges the hard work of all staff and contractors throughout the pandemic.

Staff have adapted well to new procedures and embraced digital improvements getting used to working remotely while still providing a quality service to our tenants.

We want to acknowledge our tenants and their patience and understanding throughout the pandemic.

The Association takes the ideas from tenants very seriously. Wherever possible we try to improve our services based on recommendations from our tenants' group, CaRTO (Castlehill Registered Tenants' Organisation).

We are committed to improving our services. During the pandemic when we were all locked down and confined to our homes, we realised we needed to improve our methods of communicating with tenants. The answer is obvious, to move more things into the digital realm. We are working with our IT provider to ensure that we can conduct more business in a digital way. We are pleased to report that we have email and mobile contacts for over 80% of our tenants and hope to move towards keeping tenants up to date using digital methods as we move out of the pandemic. By doing this we can reduce costs and provide tenants with a more efficient way to file requests and receive important information.

If you have not updated your contact information with us, we'd ask you to contact your Housing Officer or speak to our Customer Services Assistants. Should you want to remain receiving paper copies of things please let them know. We are working hard to ensure that all our tenants receive information in the best way for them.

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## MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORK

Castlehill acknowledges that this year has been particularly difficult for everyone. Government guidelines limited normal maintenance practice.

The pandemic had a major effect on the way Castlehill's Property Services department has managed to conduct repairs. During the 2 national lockdowns; we have adapted and introduced new ways of working to allow us to deliver essential services to our customers safely and as efficiently as the conditions have allowed. The priority has been to keep tenants and staff as safe as possible whilst ensuring that our legal responsibilities in keeping our properties gas safe and wind and watertight are met. This has not been without issues as government guidelines have changed constantly, but we have worked hard to keep homes gas safety compliant and pushed ahead with repairs when restrictions lifted.

New grounds maintenance and repairs maintenance contracts are now in place and digital inspection documents have been introduced to record inspections of the works.

We have continued to keep the cyclical maintenance program on track, and we are keeping up to date with lift and stairlift servicing. We are also on track with fire safety risk assessments and servicing of the fire safety equipment.



# COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS

Castlehill acknowledges that there will be times where we get things wrong. We have a robust complaints procedure in place to ensure that everything is compliant with Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Model Complaint procedure.



## **Castlehill has a 100% response rate for complaints.**

As set out in our complaints procedure, we aim to resolve stage 1 complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

### **In the last year we had:**

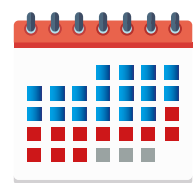
**145 stage one complaints. On average it took 1.7 days to respond to a stage one complaint.**

If complainants are still dissatisfied, they can ask for their complaint to be investigated further through stage 2. A complaint is considered to be stage 2 when it has not been resolved at stage 1 or when it is complex and requires detailed investigation. When a stage 2 complaint is raised, Castlehill's Compliance Advisor acknowledges receipt of the complaint within 3 working days. Once the complaint has been fully investigated and the outcome approved by a member of Castlehill's Senior Management Team, a full written response is provided to the complainant, as soon as possible and within 20 working days.



### **In the last year we had:**

**24 stage two complaints. All stage two complaints must be responded to within 28 days. Castlehill has responded in an average of 17.25 days.**



If the complainant is still dissatisfied after the stage 2 complaint investigation, they can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to investigate the complaint. Lessons learned from stage 1 and stage 2 complaints are identified and action is taken, as appropriate, to improve our services.



# GET INVOLVED

Participation gives you an opportunity to influence decisions about the housing services you receive, and it helps us deliver better services that focus on tenant priorities.

Our tenants are involved in sharing ideas, solving problems and planning for the future, as well as shaping our services and how we deliver them.

We support different ways to get involved. Our approach is flexible to give tenants a choice of options. Tenant participation is open to everyone and all experiences count.



An independent tenants' group, Castlehill Registered Tenants Organisation (known as CaRTO) work in partnership with us to improve all aspects of our services. CaRTO is integral in shaping policies and publications and have their own initiatives, including digital inclusion, participatory budgeting projects and virtual chats.

Scrutiny is when tenants independently review a topic and make recommendations for improvement.

CaRTO Home Link is a digital solution for tenants who want to be involved without the commitment of attending regular meetings. We will let you know about upcoming projects you may like to take part in, such as reviewing a policy, designing a new leaflet or asking you about your experiences as a tenant.

Scheme walkabouts are when tenants join staff to have a look around their building to point out areas of concern with gardening, maintenance, and communal cleaning with officers.

We want your feedback and value the insight that only people with real-life experience of living in a Castlehill home can provide. We aim to make it as easy as possible for people to take part in our consultations, offering online, postal and telephone options. We encourage everyone to participate and to make us aware of what we can do to make the consultation process more accessible.

**We are open to new ideas about making it easier for tenants to get involved. If you have a suggestion, or would like to get involved in any way, please let us know.**

## Join us!

**Be part of our forward thinking,  
positive team and help make a difference!**



### WE NEED PEOPLE WHO:

- Want to get involved in making important decisions about their homes and services
- Want to work in partnership with Castlehill
- Are willing to share ideas
- Like to meet new people
- Are willing to learn and develop new skills

There are lots of options to get involved at any level to suit you.

### INTERESTED?

Please contact Catherine on **01224 628109**  
or [catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk](mailto:catherine.coutts@castlehillha.co.uk)  
for more info. [www.castlehillha.co.uk](http://www.castlehillha.co.uk)



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Registered Charity Number: SC013584



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