

APSR ONLINE  
SYSTEM  
**USER GUIDE**



THE SCOTTISH  
HOUSING  
REGULATOR

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE & STATISTICAL RETURN

**2009-10**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

All Social Landlords registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 (or part thereof), and Local Housing Organisations managing Glasgow Housing Association stock, are required to complete their online Annual Performance & Statistical Return (APSR) by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. They are:

Landlord Type	Count
Mainstream, Small & Co-ownership Management Only	163
CCHA – local housing organisations	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>
	<b>225</b>

## 1.1 DEADLINE

You need to complete and authorise your return by **1<sup>st</sup> June 2010**.

## 1.2 TIMESCALES

### Forms & Guidance

Downloadable copies of the blank APSR form and accompanying guidance notes are published on our website.

### Online System

The online system will be available from **1<sup>st</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010** for submitting your APSR(s)<sup>1</sup>. Username & password details will be emailed directly to users in late March 2010. Setting-up instructions, including changing your password, are described in sections 3 & 4 of this guide.

## 1.3 ONLINE SYSTEM OVERVIEW

The online system has several functional benefits to help you with your return:

- **Pre-population**, if you completed a return last year, then your online form will be pre-populated with last year's data. New questions, or questions that have changed significantly since last year, will not be pre-populated.
- **Highlighting**, to help you keep your place, the system will show all pre-populated (last year's) data in red until it is over-typed with a different value.
- **Local Validation**, a range of automated checks are carried out on inputted data. You will be prompted to run these checks each time a section is saved. These include:
  - **Arithmetic**, for example,  $x + y = z$ .
  - **Format**, for example, sufficient number of decimal places provided, words input to text cells / numbers input to number cells, and so on.
  - **Logical**, for example, if A = 'Yes' then further information at B is required.

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<sup>1</sup>some users will complete more than one APSR

### 1.3 ONLINE SYSTEM OVERVIEW CNT'D

- **Global Validation** is a further check of data across the various parts of your return. For example, stock owned figures should remain consistent across the Contextual Statistical Information (CSI) sections of the form (e.g. 1D = 1P & 1Q).
- **Authorisation** of your APSR is done by your committee-approved authoriser (chairperson or secretary) who will sign-off your return online following approval by your Governing Body. A separate username and password will be issued by us directly to the authoriser during April.

> To permit authorisation all local and global validation issues must either be resolved or be commented on in the validation report (see [Section 7](#) of this guide) <

- **Broadcast Messaging** is a messaging service. Broadcast messages will appear when you log in giving advanced notification of any scheduled down-time, system changes or public holidays when Helpdesk support will be unavailable.
- **Printer Version of Form (populated)** can be produced in Portable Document Format (PDF)<sup>2</sup> at any stage of completion. The document will be populated with data at the point you last saved your form.

> A blank form can be downloaded from our website <  
see [Section 2.1](#) of this guide

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<sup>2</sup>requires Adobe Reader, free from Adobe.com

## 2 HELP

### 2.1 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

All supporting documents are available to view and download from our [website](#):

- Blank copies of APSR forms:
  - [Mainstream Small & Co-ownership](#)
  - [Management Only](#)
  - [CCHA – Local Housing Organisation](#)
- [Notes on Completion](#) are essential for completing your return and contain all the detailed definitions and advise on how to complete every question which should be read before completing return.

This document can also be viewed by clicking on the  icon displayed at the top right of the online APSR.

- SHR Guidance Note [SHR31](#) describes the format and arrangements for submitting your APSR.
- Online User Guide (this document).

### 2.2 HELPDESK

A Helpdesk is available to assist with your queries.

Please ensure that you have read all supporting documentation, including the Notes on Completion, before contacting us:

**Craig Holmes** – Business Information Officer  
Tel: 0141 271 3757 (Mon – Fri, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm)\*  
[craig.holmes@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:craig.holmes@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk)

**Christine Dugan** – Business Information Manager  
Tel: 0141 271 3756 (Mon – Fri, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm)\*  
[christine.dugan@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:christine.dugan@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk)

\* If lines are busy please leave voicemail or email us

**Helpdesk closed on weekends and public holidays**

# 3 SETTING UP

## 3.1 RECOMMENDED SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- **Operating System:** Windows 2000 or higher
- **Web Browser:** Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) version 6.0 or higher
- **PDF Viewer:** Adobe Reader version 5.0 or higher

Your IE and Adobe software versions can be checked by opening the relevant application and selecting **Help > About [application name]** from the top menu. If your system does not appear to meet these requirements then please contact our [helpdesk](#) for advice.

**General note on internet browsers** – other browsers such as Firefox or Safari (Mac OS) should work on our systems but are not tested or supported by our [helpdesk](#).

## 3.2 APPLICATION SETTINGS

Please ensure your browser (IE6 or IE7) and Adobe Reader settings are configured as follows:

### Configure IE6

- open IE6
- from the top menu select Tools > Internet Options
- select General options tab and go to Temporary Internet Files
- click on Settings and ensure that the 'Check for newer versions of stored pages' option is set to 'Every time you start Internet Explorer'
- click on OK to save settings
- then select Content options tab and click on AutoComplete Settings
- under the 'Use AutoComplete for' heading, ensure that 'Forms' is not selected
- click OK to save settings
- finally, click OK to save all settings and exit Internet Options window

### Configure IE7

- open IE7
- from the top menu, select Tools > Internet Options
- select the General options tab and go to Browse History > Settings
- select Temporary Internet Files and ensure that the 'Check for newer versions of stored pages' option is set to 'Every time you start Internet Explorer'
- click on OK to save settings
- then select the Content options tab and click on AutoComplete Settings
- under the 'Use AutoComplete for' heading, ensure that 'Forms' is not selected
- click OK to save settings
- finally, click OK to save all settings and exit Internet Options window

## 3.2 APPLICATION SETTINGS CNT'D

### Configure Adobe Reader

If your system does not have Adobe Reader installed then a free download of version 9 may be obtained from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)

**> Always consult your IT Administrator before  
downloading any software <**

Follow these steps to ensure that Adobe Reader is set up properly for using the Printer Version of Form function described later in this guide:

- Open Adobe Reader
- From the top menu select Edit > Preferences to open the Preferences window
- Select Internet from the left hand pane
- Ensure that Display PDF in Browser is not checked
- Click OK to save settings and exit Preferences window

## 3.3 ONLINE SYSTEM USER ACCOUNTS

### APSR

You will be emailed your confidential user account details before 1st April. Requests for additional user accounts should be emailed to Jerry Lewis, Regulation Officer ([jerry.lewis@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jerry.lewis@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk)). The full name, telephone number and email address details for every new user are required.

### RSL Directory

If you need to update your address details shown in Parts A & B of the APSR, you will have to log in to the [RSL Directory](#). You should use the APSR account details we sent you to access the Directory.

Please note that changing your password for the APSR does not automatically change your RSL Directory password. This needs to be changed separately while accessing the RSL Directory.

The [RSL Directory](#) is accessed via the menu to the left of the APSR Online System (Administration > RSL Directory).

For obvious security reasons, we strongly advise that account details are not shared among users.

# 4 GETTING STARTED

## 4.1 LOGGING ON

Start by logging on to the APSR:

 <http://www.esystems.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/apsr2010>

Login using the username and password details that were emailed to you. These details will be required each time the form is accessed and you will only be able to view information relating to the RSL(s) you are responsible for.

If your log-in does not seem to be working, or in the unlikely event of your account accessing the wrong organisation, then please contact the [helpdesk](#) for assistance.

You can work confidentially on your APSR at any time until it is authorised<sup>3</sup>. After authorisation, you will not be able to make any changes while we review your data. If at this stage you realise an error has been made, then contact the [helpdesk](#) to arrange a correction.

You may want to add APSR Online to your web-favourites:

- from the top menu select Favourites and click on Add to Favourites
- rename favourite and set a folder to create it in (both optional)
- click OK to apply settings

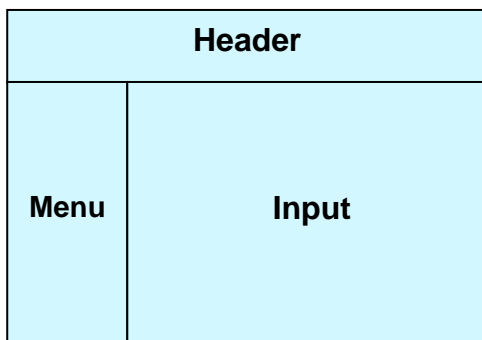
## 4.2 CHANGE PASSWORD


You will not be prompted to change your password but we recommend that you do so as soon as possible:

- from the left hand menu, select Change Password
- input your new password and confirm it

## 4.3 SCREEN LAYOUT

The main screen is made up of three panes:



1. **Header** shows RSL name, registration number and  icon to Notes on Completion at all times

2. **Input** displays input forms

3. **Menu** to navigate through question parts or access admin options

<sup>3</sup> unless you report a problem when we may ask to view your APSR

## 4.4 LEFT HAND MENU OPTIONS

### Administration

- **RSL Directory**, direct access to the Online Register for updating Front Page details. If you have lost or forgotten you login details for this system then please contact:  
[jerry.lewis@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jerry.lewis@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk)
- **Broadcast Messages**, keep up to date with the latest system information from the Helpdesk particularly for details of any scheduled down-time
- **Change Password**, when you first log-in to maintain security
- **Configure Highlighting**, explained in [Section 4.5](#)
- **APSR Authorisation**, for final sign-off by Chairperson / Secretary once approved by Governing Body
- **Printer Version of Form**, to produce a printable version of your APSR at any stage of completion. Note that this is not the way to produce a blank version of the form which should be downloaded from our [website](#)
- **Global Validation**, runs a validation check across all parts and sections of the form. This **must** be carried out before final submission, as you will not be able authorise your return if you have not run and commented on any outstanding validation issues reported.

### Non-CSI Sections

- Front page<sup>4</sup>
- Summary Information<sup>5</sup> (Part A of the APSR)
- Classification Table (Part B of the APSR)
- Governance & Accountability (Part C of the APSR)

### Housing Management Sections (Part D of the APSR)

- Links for Sections 1 to 6

### Maintenance (Part E of the APSR)

### Development (Part F of the APSR)

### CSI Sections (Part I of the APSR)

- Links for Sections 1 to 12

### Appendix

- Appendix 1

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<sup>4</sup> update made via RSL Directory

<sup>5</sup> update made via RSL Directory

## 4.5 CONFIGURE HIGHLIGHTING

If you completed an APSR last year, then your return will be pre-populated with that data where possible<sup>6</sup>.

Highlighting is activated by default, this will help you keep a track of what new data has been input to the form. It works by initially showing last year's data in red<sup>7</sup>. When overtyped with a different value and saved, it will turn black indicating that a change has been made.

Highlighting can be switched on or off at any time during completion:

- select Configure Highlighting from the menu
- select the sections of the form you want to highlight/de-highlight
- click on Apply then return to the form via the menu

## 4.6 STANDARD CONTROLS & ALERTS

Most commonly used buttons and alert windows:

- **Submit** to save changes. The button is normally located at the foot of the form. You may wish to submit your data quite regularly to be on the safe side. If you attempt to move to another Part of the return without submitting first, the system will prompt you to reconsider. Not saving the form at this stage will result in all changes made since the last 'submit' being lost. A message window will confirm the changes.
- **Return to top of page** is helpful to navigate through lengthier parts of the return.
- **Tabs** positioned along the top of the form (Sec 1, Sec 2, Sec 3, etc) for screens that contain more than one section.
- **Local Validation** is optional every time you save. Selecting this option generates a printable data validation report window for your information/action which may be closed or minimised.

The report will list question numbers where the submitted value does not meet the validation criteria of the current section (checks may be arithmetic, null or missing values, values that don't cross reference etc). You should go back to the information in question and update as appropriate, or input and save a comment in the corresponding box explaining why the difference occurs.

**We recommend you should select the "Validate the Data?" option once you 'submit' a section, and deal with any issues before moving on to the next section.**


**Add New Authority** where a breakdown of data by Local Authority is required. Clicking on this button will enable you to select an authority from the drop-down menu and add relevant data below. Click on 'Accept' to add the changes to the table or 'Cancel' to leave. Note that authority changes are not saved until you click "Submit".

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<sup>6</sup>any new or altered questions are not pre-populated

<sup>7</sup>only on screen – does not apply to Printer Version

#### 4.6 STANDARD CONTROLS & ALERTS CNT'D

- **Add New Row** provides additional rows if / when required.
- **Radio buttons** are primarily used for Yes / No questions.
- **Notes on Completion** accessed via the  icon, always at top of screen.
- **Description Codes** apply to CSI Sections 1(N) and 2(C). View the full code descriptions by clicking on the link.



## 5 DATA INPUT

### 5.1 CELL TYPES & INPUT PROCESSES

Input is straightforward throughout the form:

- navigate from cell to cell using either the Tab button on your keyboard or using your mouse pointer to directly input to a cell
- input cells are generally white
- green cells are automatically filled in for you, such as column totals or percentages
- grey cells are non-enterable and are usually associated with Yes / No questions – for example when No logically means the relevant cell should be skipped. Also, cells and menu options that are not applicable to CCHA and Management Only returns are greyed out as well.

#### **Radio Buttons**

- these are used when there is a set of predetermined answers to a question usually Yes or No. Click on the appropriate radio button to make your choice

#### **Add / Remove Row**

- this facility is used when you are asked for a number of pieces of information regarding your organisation. Add New Row creates more rows where required, or alternatively Delete Row removes them

#### **Text (comments)**

- position the cursor in the text box and start typing. The box will automatically expand for larger narratives

#### **Add New Authority**

- Some tables may require a local authority breakdown of information.
- Construct table using the Add new local authority button to access the Add new local authority screen. Here you can select the required Authority from the drop-down menu and input the corresponding data below.
- Click Accept to add data to main table or Cancel to leave without changes.
- Note that the changes will not be saved until you click Submit.

#### **Remove Authority**

- remove an authority by clicking on the corresponding Delete button.

## 5.2 SUBMIT & VALIDATE

- Click on Submit to save form. The Submit dialogue box will give you the options to cancel, proceed only, or proceed and validate data (by selecting the validate data tick box).
- A confirmation box should pop-up to confirm that the update was successful. Click OK to hide.
- **We recommend that you opt to validate data each time you submit a section.** On selecting Local Validation, then a separate pop-up window will display a report with issues (local – checks are confined to the relevant question only). The local validation report can be generated and printed as often as necessary until all errors have been corrected.
- If there are items in the validation report that cannot be resolved, you should provide an explanation in the corresponding comments box. **Authorisation of the submission cannot be carried out until all outstanding issues have either been resolved or commented on.** Click on Submit to save your comments and we will refer to these during our validation process.

## 5.3 RSL DIRECTORY

### Updating Parts A & B

These parts display data directly from information held in the online Register. Any update to Parts A & B need to be made via the [RSL Directory](#):

- click on RSL Directory from the left hand menu and login
- remember, the APSR account details we sent you will also access this system. Please note, changing your password for the APSR does not automatically change your RSL Directory password. This needs to be changed separately while accessing the RSL Directory. N.B. If you are an existing APSR user, your password will have been updated to that issued for this year's APSR return.
- update the Directory and submit changes
- return to APSR form (you will need to click 'refresh' to view changes)



## 6 PRINTING YOUR APSR

- To print off a hard copy of your APSR return (for Committee approval prior to authorisation), select Printer Version of Form from the left hand menu. From there you may print off the return in three separate sections. Each hard copy is created as a PDF format file that is automatically loaded into Adobe Acrobat Reader for you to print off on the printer identified on your system.
- While the system makes every attempt to provide a generic report format you may find that your printer makes slight adjustments to the font size of the text. This can result in some slight overtyping of text past the end of the comment box outlines.



## 7 AUTHORISATION - 3 STEPS

### 7.1 STEP 1: GLOBAL VALIDATION

- All local validation issues should have been resolved by this stage of the input process (see [Section 5.2 Submit & Validate](#)). Any outstanding issues are carried forward into the Global Validation process.
- Global Validation **must be run** before the data is presented to your Governing Body and any queries resolved before the return is authorised. This process will check for inadvertently omitted data, inconsistencies across all parts of your return and identify any other corrective action.
- Select Global Validation from the left menu bar. The system will automatically generate a printable Validation Report window identifying sections where anomalies exist.
- Similar to Local Validation as described in [Section 5.2 Submit & Validate](#) (page 13), the Global Validation report can be generated and printed as often as necessary until all data anomalies have been corrected. If any items are left unresolved you **must** add an explanation in the comments field otherwise you will not be able to authorise and submit your return. Click on Submit to save your comments.
- We will view all validation reports where items are unresolved and therefore giving us as full an explanation as you can may remove the need for us to contact you further.
- Finally, the Committee and the person authorising the final submission (7.3 Online Authorisation) must be made aware of any uncorrected items on the validation report.

### 7.2 STEP 2: PRINT YOUR COPY

- Print a hard copy of the return for committee approval and attach a copy of the Global Validation report if necessary.

### 7.3 STEP 3: ONLINE AUTHORISATION

- Following committee approval, the nominated authoriser (chairperson or secretary) must authorise the data online. In order to do this, you (the user) should log onto the system and select APSR Authorisation from the left menu. Then the authoriser should complete: -
  - date of committee meeting at which the APSR was approved
  - name of Chairperson / Secretary
  - digital signature (a password issued directly to the authoriser – not the same as the user's password)
- Once the authoriser has entered data into each of these cells, click Submit and the data will be finally submitted to SHR. A confirmation box will pop-up advising that your return has been received successfully. At this point, no further changes can be made to the form.

### **7.3 STEP 3: ONLINE AUTHORISATION CNT'D**

- Please ensure you keep a paper copy of the final submitted return and the minutes of the committee meeting where the submission was approved. Along with any documentation that supports the data you have submitted, particularly in relation to the key performance indicators.

Business Information Team

March 2010