

Communities Scotland
Inspection report

Capital City Homes

October 2006

Contents

| | Pages |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Context | 2 |
| 3. How good are the services? | 4 |
| 4. Is the service managed for improvement? | 9 |
| 5. Governance and financial management | 12 |
| 6. Areas for improvement action | 15 |
| 7. Next steps | 16 |
| Appendix: Sources of Evidence | 17 |
| Glossary | 18 |

1. Introduction

About this inspection

1.1 This inspection was carried out by Communities Scotland under section 69 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 on behalf of Scottish Ministers. Our purpose in inspection is to provide an independent external assessment of the effectiveness of housing service delivery and make recommendations to help improvement. Inspections are conducted within a published framework of Performance Standards.

How we assessed performance

1.2 Our inspectors asked two key questions:

- How good are the services we have inspected?
- How well are these services being managed for improvement?

1.3 In order to answer these questions the inspectors:

- spoke to staff and members of the governing body;
- visited local areas and properties;
- spoke to tenants with regard to their views on services;
- tested first-hand how well services were being delivered;
- examined key policies, publications, information and the organisation's self-assessment submitted for this inspection; and,
- analysed published performance and financial information.

The inspection team

1.4 The lead inspector was Margaret Paton (Associate Inspector) supported by our financial analysts. We were on site on 25th May 2005. We would like to thank everyone involved in the inspection, particularly the governing body and agents, for their time and co-operation.

Responding to this inspection

1.5 We expect Capital City Homes (CCH) to make the summary of this report available to anyone who wants it, report our findings to tenants and other stakeholders and respond to the issues raised in this report.

2. Context

About the organisation

- 2.1 The initial concept for Capital City Homes (CCH) was to create a 'Local Housing Company' to operate in Edinburgh to address issues of supply and demand and area renewal in the City. Its primary purpose was to deliver affordable housing in the City to 'address the Council's strategic objective of increasing the provision of good quality, affordable rented housing in Edinburgh', but in the context of regeneration and the need to boost supply.
- 2.2 The selection of initial sites was very closely linked to a major demolition and renewal programme being undertaken by the Council, involving the promotion of sites that had recently been cleared or were due for clearance and their use, to the extent that that was needed, for the relocation of displaced tenants exercising the 'right to return'.
- 2.3 Issues of funding, financial capacity, viability and the benefits of wider renewal initiatives led the Council to look at the option of working in partnership with an existing housing group. Places for People (PfP) was selected as the partner for this initiative in 2000.
- 2.4 CCH was registered as a social landlord (RSL) by Communities Scotland in February 2001. It is a non profit distributing company limited by guarantee with charitable status. This is its first inspection. The parent company is not registered with Communities Scotland and our inspection relates only to the services and performance of Capital City Homes.
- 2.5 CCH is committed to the provision of affordable housing throughout the City of Edinburgh. So far, it has built 59 new properties for rent, all in West Pilton, an area of social housing which is undergoing regeneration. These properties are walk-up tenement flats and terraced houses, mainly for general needs but 2 are fully accessible to wheelchair users. This first development provided houses ready to let between March and October 2004. A second phase of 35 homes was completed in February 2006.
- 2.6 CCH acquired further sites for future development from Edinburgh City Council in March 2005, in various locations throughout Edinburgh. It plans to provide a further 156 affordable homes for rent, while 2 of the sites will also provide houses for sale and other tenures. House building has now started on several of these sites.

- 2.7 Capital City Homes has not established its housing stock as quickly as anticipated. Delays had an impact on income and CCH decided not to continue employing its own staff members when the managing director left in May 2004 and later the office administrator. A part time managing director, provided by PfP, has been providing services for 1.5 days a week since January 2005. Capital City Homes purchases services from a number of other group members. For example, housing management and property management services from Edinvar (now Castle Rock Edinvar), development services from PfP Developments Ltd and other central services from the Group parent.
- 2.8 The Annual Performance and Statistical Return (APSR) asks registered social landlords (RSLs) to select a peer group which best describes their organisation. CCH selected the group described as small RSLs with fewer than 250 houses that operate in urban areas. This is the group we used to compare CCH's performance. It is noted that CCH is an emerging organisation where most of the stock has yet to be developed.

Key Facts

- 2.9 Capital City Homes is still a relatively new organisation but the table below gives background information and shows some trends over the last three financial years.

| Capital City Homes | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Houses owned | 12 | 59 | 94 |
| Employees | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Annual turnover (£'000's) | £1,533 | £110,263 | £184,638 |
| Total possible rental income (£'000's) | £1,533 | £110,438 | £204,302 |
| Rental income from housing benefit (%) | 27% | 53.5% | 62.7% |
| Average weekly rent (£) | £66.91 | £57.41 | £57.10 |
| New Lets | - | 59 | 35 |
| Responsive repairs carried out | - | 0 | 182 |
| Maintenance spend per house (£) (Direct cost excluding overheads) | - | £648 | £605 |

Source – Communities Scotland, APSR and annual accounts

3. How good are the services?

Housing Management

Access

Social landlords should provide open, fair and equal access to their housing lists and should work with partners to simplify and maximise access to housing.

- 3.1 Services are delivered from the Cowgate office in the city centre, several miles from West Pilton, where all current tenants are located. Residents we spoke to said they are satisfied that the office is easy to get to when necessary. The building itself is suitable; accessible to people with varying needs and it provides private interview facilities.
- 3.2 At the time of inspection CCH was not letting houses as there had been limited turnover in its first development, occupied in 2004, and its second phase was under construction. Capital City Homes has recognised that it needs to make its letting arrangements fairer and more transparent in preparation for the letting of Phase 2. CCH has never maintained its own housing list and will now let its properties through a combination of Council nominations and referrals, and referrals from the common housing register for social landlords in Edinburgh, Edindex. Anyone over the age of 16 can apply to Edindex at any time. CCH is aiming to provide open and fair access through Edindex and is actively negotiating with Edinburgh City Council to raise awareness of the location and availability of its housing stock.
- 3.3 Previously, as its new stock was becoming available, CCH offered its houses in the first instance to applicants nominated by Edinburgh City Council according to the Council's 'right to return' arrangement, then to other nominations from the Council's housing list and its homeless referrals. The 'right to return' arrangements allowed City Council tenants whose homes were demolished in the West Pilton redevelopment area to return to the CCH properties.
- 3.4 CCH's allocation policy reflected the regeneration objectives of the organisation in that the established principle in such schemes in the City that first lettings would be to those exercising a 'right to return' was agreed by CCH with the then Scottish Homes in 2001. In practice, by no means all tenants choose to return, in which case first lets were subject to the nominations process. Subsequent lettings would be via Edindex and follow standard procedure.

- 3.5 The Association accepts that there were delays in finalising the arrangements and mechanisms in terms of ‘right to return’ and that the relative roles of ‘right to return’ and the standard lettings policies need to be explicit and effectively communicated.
- 3.6 CCH receives monitoring reports on the characteristics of those on the waiting list for its properties from Edindex. Therefore the Board has information on the ethnicity, household composition and housing needs of its applicants to inform and influence its provisions for access.

Meeting need and maximising choice

Social landlords should meet housing need through lettings and should maximise choice for applicants.

- 3.7 Houses in Phase 1 were let under the “right to return” arrangement with the Council, which meant that tenants who were affected by the demolition and renewal programme were given the opportunity to return to the area. The remainder of houses were let through Edinvar.
- 3.8 CCH’s allocation policy is based on prioritising those in housing need and in the majority of lets we reviewed there was evidence of housing need. The policy recognises homelessness as a priority and 17% of all lets in Phase 1 were to homeless applicants.

Sustaining tenancies and preventing homelessness

Social landlords should maximise security of tenure for all residents of their accommodation, and should work to sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness through their delivery of housing management services.

- 3.9 Capital City Homes has made progress in this area. All of its tenants have new Scottish secure tenancy agreements and CCH has created a clear identity for itself with its tenants. The agent provides named officers at Edinvar for tenancy matters and these officers are in regular contact with the tenants.
- 3.10 CCH provides good information and advice to tenants at the start of their tenancy with a tenant’s handbook and through personal contact. There is now a good system of new tenant home visits in place, complemented by bi-monthly tenant meetings that are reasonably well attended. The tenants we spoke to were very positive about the services and their new homes.

- 3.11 CCH knows it has been poor at managing rent arrears to sustain tenancies in its first housing development. There was a lack of readiness by CCH when the properties were first let, to collect rent and manage arrears. This led to the issue of notices of proceedings for recovery of possession in a very high number of cases. The 33 notices issued in 2004/05 applied to 56% of all its tenants. The cases we reviewed confirm that there was limited early action to prevent the build up of arrears.
- 3.12 However, regular and sustained contact is now being made to establish arrangements to pay and reduce arrears. Capital City Homes is now better prepared to take early action and assist tenants with arrangements for Housing Benefit for its next phase of new homes.

Quality of neighbourhoods

Social landlords should deliver services to ensure that neighbourhoods are attractive, well-maintained and safe places to live. They should deal appropriately with anti-social behaviour.

- 3.13 CCH's houses are in a well maintained environment and it is actively involved with the West Pilton Problem Solving Partnership along with other agencies on the estate. The purpose of the partnership is to gather tenant and resident feedback on problems and difficulties and to address them in a collective and comprehensive manner. There are difficulties with vandalism at the adjacent building site, and the tenants we spoke to are concerned about unauthorised access and loitering in the entrances to the flats. These issues are being tackled by the collective actions of the organisations within the partnership.
- 3.14 The agents and tenants both expressed concerns about antisocial behaviour, which may be higher than reported. This is an area for strategy development as CCH continues to define its landlord role. There have been 2 complaints received and our case reviews showed that these were dealt with within appropriate time scales and in line with the procedures agreed between CCH and Edinvar.

Property maintenance

Access to the repairs service

Social landlords should have arrangements in place that make it easy for tenants to report repairs and have them carried out.

3.15 Due to the recent completion of its houses, CCH has only been required to provide a very limited repairs service to date. It has arranged for good access to its repairs service and an appointment system is in place. Repairs can be reported to the agent easily by telephone 24 hours a day and there is a direct contact for gas central heating repairs.

Speed and quality of responsive repairs service

Social landlords should set challenging targets for completing repairs, strive to achieve them and ensure repairs are completed to a high standard.

3.16 We could not assess the quality of the service as the majority of properties have been occupied for less than 12 months and the building contractor is still responsible for fixing any early defects. There have been very few repairs required. CCH is preparing for this responsibility by setting targets for dealing with responsive repairs that are comparable with other RSLs. These are; for emergencies 6 hours, urgent repairs 3 working days and for routine repairs 3 working days for completion. No performance trends on speed or quality have been established but regular reports to the Board on monthly performance show that response times are close to target.

3.17 Capital City Homes provides details of the right to repair in its tenants' handbook but has not been required to carry out any such repairs. The arrangements for monitoring repairs satisfaction is at an early stage, with comment cards being introduced, and a prize draw as an incentive for their return.

Physical quality of houses

Social landlords should have good information about the condition of their houses and should deliver effective maintenance programmes that take account of housing quality and home safety needs.

3.18 Scottish Ministers have set a target that all social landlords' houses should meet the new Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by 2015. Landlords were required to prepare a plan showing how they will achieve this by April 2005. Capital City Homes' houses are already of a high quality, all having been recently completed. The delivery

plan indicates that all of its houses will meet the standards. There is no asbestos in the properties.

- 3.19 CCH will rely on 5 year maintenance plans completed by its parent PfP, which are reviewed annually for all group properties. It does have its own cyclical programmes in place for servicing gas appliances and smoke detectors and for painter work.
- 3.20 CCH has adopted its agent's system for gas safety checks and is aware of the importance of its responsibilities to comply with gas safety regulations. Almost all gas safety checks have been carried out within the statutory 12 month period, but CCH has failed to achieve this for one of its properties.

Responsiveness to tenants

Social landlords should place the people they serve at the heart of their work, treat them with respect and be responsive to their views and priorities.

- 3.21 CCH is at an early stage in demonstrating its responsiveness to tenants. We refer more to its lack of readiness to manage the properties when they were first completed, in section 4. This resulted in early opportunities for establishing a responsive and positive relationship with its tenants being diminished as resources were concentrated on tackling arrears for a high proportion of tenancies and on the allocation of properties which had remained unlet for some time.
- 3.22 CCH has not been strategic about collecting tenants' views in order to respond to their needs and priorities but told us that it recognises responsiveness is a key factor in achieving tenant satisfaction. It has relied until recently on views and feedback from the two tenant members on the Board and anticipates recruiting more tenants to join from the second phase of housing development.
- 3.23 CCH considers that current stock numbers are too low to make for a feasible registered tenants organisation, but this is a decision for tenants themselves to make. There are some indications that responsiveness is starting to be addressed, for example through regular tenant meetings, and the Places for People Area Customer Liaison Panel (Scotland) has the potential to include CCH tenants or RTO representatives. A good example of where tenant requests have been taken on board is in the introduction of swipe cards for rent payment.

4. Is the service managed for improvement?

Resource management and efficiency

Social landlords should maximise their income, in a way that is fair to service users, and manage costs effectively.

- 4.1 Capital City Homes recognises that its performance in minimising income lost through rent arrears is poor when compared with other RSLs, and arrears levels are substantially above its own targets. The cases we reviewed confirm that there has been insufficient early contact and action to prevent the build up of arrears. There was an initial lack of clarity in the management roles between CCH and its agent. This has now been addressed through improved performance monitoring, and arrears have recently started to show a downward trend. CCH offers a good range of methods to pay rent and is introducing swipe cards following requests from tenants.

| Capital City Homes | 2003-2004 | | | At March 2005 |
|---|-----------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | CCH | Peer Average | National Median | CCH |
| Total arrears as % of total gross rental income | 26.65 | 6.40 | 6.38 | 18.77 |
| Total current arrears as % of total gross rental income | 26.7 | 5.36 | 4.56 | 16.6 |
| Current arrears (non technical) as % of total gross rental income | 0 | 3.29 | 3.43 | 9.0 |
| Current arrears (technical) as % of total gross rental income | 26.7 | 2.06 | 1.13 | 8.6 |
| Total former tenant arrears | 0 | - | - | £1,293 |
| As % of total gross rental income | 0 | 1.04 | 1.81 | 1.17 |
| Rent arrears written off | 0 | - | - | 0 |

- 4.2 Capital City Homes knows that its performance in minimising the loss of rental income through empty houses has also been a weakness. Given the demand for, and high quality of, these new homes this is poor resource management. The difficulties in letting the first phase of properties have been referred to earlier, particularly the delays in effectively managing the Right to Return and the consequences of the shortfall in those choosing to exercise it. In some instances new build properties were unoccupied for over 8 weeks, leading not only to lost rent but also to additional security costs.
- 4.3 The Board and agents recognise that this is an unacceptable position and considerable progress has been made to forge links with the City Council housing officers to ensure that agreements are in place prior to letting the next phase of new houses.

| Capital City Homes | 2003-2004 | | | March 2005* |
|--|-----------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | CCH | Peer Average | National Median | CCH |
| Rental income lost due to empty houses (£) | 0 | - | - | 23,210 |
| As % of total rental income | 0 | 0.6 | 3.0 | 22 |
| % of new lets in less than 2 weeks | 0 | 60.2 | 78.4 | 30 |
| % of new lets in 2-4 weeks | 0 | 21.7 | 9.3 | 9 |
| % of new lets in more than 4 weeks | 0 | 18.0 | 12.3 | 61 |
| Average time to re-let (days) | 0 | 31 | 34 | 52 |

Source: Communities Scotland APSRs and CCH's inspection submission

* figures to March 2005 based on 59 new lets and 2 re-lets

Social landlords should manage the cost of their services effectively and should procure repairs and maintenance services in a way that takes account of quality and cost.

- 4.4 Capital City Homes purchases services from a number of other group members. For example housing management and property management services from Edinvar (now Castle Rock Edinvar), development services from PfP Developments Ltd and other central services from the Group parent. Edinvar was appointed in March 2004 after a tender process, although no service level agreement was signed until January 2005. The lack of a service level agreement could have compromised CCH's ability to manage both the quality and cost of these services.
- 4.5 CCH believes that employing another member of the PfP group will enable it to minimise costs and benefit from expertise and economies of scale as its procurement of maintenance and other services becomes more substantial. At the time of inspection CCH could not tell us its costs for management services. In 2003/04 it only had 12 units in management for a limited part of the year, however, figures for 2004/05 indicate that costs for managing properties are £431 per unit and this is low when compared to other RSLs.

Performance management

Social landlords should have clear objectives, standards and targets for housing management and property maintenance services, should monitor achievement of these, and should work to continuously improve services.

- 4.6 CCH is clear that its role and focus has been changing and developing; from being solely a development agency to being a landlord and property manager. It has recognised that organisational resources, including the Board's own time, have also to

be directed to providing responsive housing management services. There is a clear understanding of the importance of good performance management in ensuring tenant satisfaction.

- 4.7 CCH knows that its failure to put a performance management framework in place in advance of completion of the first properties, and of tenancies being allocated, contributed to the poor performance on empty properties and arrears already referred to above.
- 4.8 CCH has now developed a performance management framework to ensure targets are set for each area of the service and so that performance will be monitored weekly by the agent. Services are still limited so performance is currently reported regularly to the Board on only a few key performance indicators for letting and arrears. CCH plans to develop this monitoring and reporting further as the services to tenants grow to include tenant participation, more repairs and housing management.
- 4.9 A separate report by Edinvar on meeting its own performance targets as an agent, as set out in the service level agreement, is provided to the board by the business support manager of the PfP group. Action to address any issues is recommended and the business support manager thereafter works with the agency staff to address these. This is a reasonable approach, and recognises the inherent lack of independence in inter-group services.

5. Governance and financial management

Leadership and direction

A clear vision or purpose and an inclusive, well-informed planning process are key to effectively delivering the services that tenants want.

- 5.1 Capital City Homes is a subsidiary of the Places for People Group Ltd, which is the sole member and shareholder of CCH. Its rules provide for it to be run by a board of 15 people, with 3 categories of membership. The Council nominates 5 people and the board appoints a further 5 people from its tenants, 4 as community or independent members and one place is reserved for a person appointed by Places for People. These arrangements aim to ensure that no one group will dominate the board and that a range of interests is taken into account.
- 5.2 CCH is operating in breach of its rules by having appointed only 2 tenant members to the board; less than the 5 members required. The Board has made efforts to encourage others to participate but considers filling these places at present to be impractical. CCH does not have the flexibility to wait for new developments to provide new tenant members.
- 5.3 Attendance at meetings by board members is lower than the peer average and has been falling over the last three years. There is a requirement that at least one member is present from each of the three groups represented on the board. This has been difficult with only 2 tenant members and has led to at least one meeting being inquorate. These rule breaches are a significant weakness. CCH is aware of the need to attract additional tenant members and has taken action to ensure that the board can remain quorate and operate effectively.
- 5.4 Overall the board has a good range of expertise and experience to lead the organisation. It now has a clear view of its role and a good understanding of its operating environment. The agendas of the board meetings now give sufficient priority to the management and maintenance of its houses, balanced with its role as a developer.
- 5.5 Capital City Homes prepares an annual Business Plan setting out the direction of the organisation, which is focused on growth. The 2004/05 business plan includes an ambitious development programme to provide a further 468 affordable rented homes by February 2007. This is a significant business expansion in a short timeframe. These

higher level objectives have not been translated into an operational plan for the more detailed actions and milestones to be achieved in bringing this to a successful conclusion.

- 5.6 CCH is conscious of the delays and difficulties it faced in acquiring its first sites and how planning with partners must be managed effectively to achieve its expansion. The board believes that the support, both financially and in development experience, of the PfP group is an advantage, as is its range of experienced board members who bring a variety of relevant backgrounds and networks.

Ethical Standards

Staff and governing body members should promote values that underpin good governance and should act with honesty and integrity, focusing on the best interests of the organisation and its service users.

- 5.7 With its reliance on Edinburgh City Council as a partner, and 5 board members being Edinburgh councillors, Capital City Homes recognises the importance of managing any potential dualities of interest. The organisation has a detailed code of conduct for board members who declare any relevant interests in any item of business at the start of every meeting. We saw that this is being managed appropriately.
- 5.8 Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 prevents board members, employees and their relatives from benefiting from their connections with an RSL except in strictly defined circumstances. We found that Capital City Homes technically breached this legislation by making a non contractual payment to an outgoing CCH staff member.

Financial viability and management

Social landlords should be financially viable in the short and medium term, and sustainable in the longer term. They should have a robust financial management framework.

- 5.9 Capital City Homes has exposure to financial risk and its financial projections indicate that it will make deficits in the early years. The company is in a start up position, supported by its parent and other group companies. Its growth is dependent on obtaining sites from the council on which new properties are to be built. To date, there have been some delays in obtaining the necessary sites and, as a result, delays with construction. However, 7 of the 8 sites originally planned for acquisition from the Council were transferred by April 2005.

- 5.10 As Capital City Homes is a new organisation, rental income was received for the first time in 2003/04. Deficits in the first two years were anticipated and are legitimate in representing start up costs for the company, and the 2004/05 business plan prepared by Capital City Homes indicates long term sustainability.
- 5.11 The financial management framework is based around the annual business plan and this includes comprehensive financial information.
- 5.12 At the time of inspection, we did not see evidence of regular monitoring against budget, however, monthly reporting against the business plan is now part of the evolving financial management framework.

6. Areas for improvement action

6.1 These are the key areas that need to be targeted for improvement action. They are broadly in order of priority within each of the key service areas.

Across all of its areas of activity, Capital City Homes should:

- Further develop its approach to the collection and analysis of information on the needs of its current and potential customers and set objectives and targets for achieving equalities across all aspects of its service;
- expand its service standards and its performance monitoring and reporting framework, to achieve continuous improvement, and;
- establish formal arrangements to collect and take account of the views and priorities of its service users in the development of its services.

In housing management, Capital City Homes should:

- improve access to its houses by ensuring that any lets from nominations or referrals from other parties are subject to protocols reflecting good practice;
- ensure that all nominations are assessed in accordance with the CCH allocation policy;
- improve the efficiency of letting, including the pre-allocation of new properties, and;
- ensure early and preventative action in arrears management.

In property maintenance, Capital City Homes should:

- ensure it complies with gas safety legislation, ensuring all properties have valid certificates at all times, and;
- be ready to provide a responsive repairs service which will ensure repairs are completed to a high standard.

In governance and financial management, Capital City Homes should:

- ensure that the balance of membership of the Board is in line with its rules and that all board meetings are quorate;
- ensure that any payments or benefits to relevant people are consistent with schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;
- ensure that financial management and reporting complies with published good practice.

7. Next steps

- 7.1 This report highlights our findings following the inspection. We expect all organisations to respond effectively to our recommendations using their own improvement planning processes. We require Capital City Homes to submit an improvement plan for agreement with us within 8 weeks of the publication of this report.
- 7.2 If you would like to see Capital City Homes' improvement plan you should contact:
- Colin Rae
Managing Director Capital City Homes
The Mission Hall
1 Roxburgh Place
Edinburgh EH8 9SU
- 7.3 Since our inspection, Capital City Homes has reviewed its business with the intention of improving services to tenants and addressing longer term viability. It is proposing a transfer of engagements to Castle Rock Edinvar, who are also part of the Places for People Group. A Business Plan has been approved by the CCH Board and has been submitted to Communities Scotland for consideration. A tenant consultation exercise has recently been completed.
- 7.4 If the plans are accepted by Communities Scotland and supported by CCH tenants, the proposed transfer will go ahead in April 2007.

Sources of evidence

Groups and third parties consulted:

- City of Edinburgh Council
- Communities Scotland Quality and Transfer Delivery Unit

Interviews/meetings:

- Members of the Association's Committee
- Chairperson
- Managing Director
- Agency Staff

Reality checks:

- Review of rent arrears cases and legal actions against tenants
- Review of gas safety documents
- Review of asbestos register
- Review of responsive repairs
- Review of housing list applications, allocations and suspensions
- Review of anti-social behaviour cases
- Review of Schedule 7 register
- Review of conflict of interest register
- Tour of estate

Key documents reviewed:

- Inspection submission*
- Business Plan 2004/5
- Memorandum of Association
- Schedule 7 register
- Conflict of interest register
- Performance reports

* see glossary

Glossary

| | |
|---|--|
| Annual Statistical and Performance Return (APSR) | Annual questionnaire completed by RSLs and sent to Communities Scotland. Used to keep the Register of Social Landlords up to date and to track the performance of RSLs. |
| Average | The arithmetic mean – the sum of all the values divided by the number of values. |
| Common housing register | A register of all applicants for social housing used by two or more landlords within an area. |
| Housing list | A list of applicants for housing which is used by the RSL to allocate its housing stock. |
| Inspection submission | Documents submitted by the landlord at the start of the inspection to provide information to on its performance, context and how it is structured. |
| Life cycle costing | A method of calculating the cost and timing of the repairs to, and replacement of, major building components. |
| Notice of proceedings | The formal notice provided to tenants informing them that their landlord is taking legal proceedings to seek a court order for recovery of possession of a property. |
| Peer group | A group of organisations facing similar tasks and challenges with which comparisons can be made. RSLs choose which peer group they belong to when they submit their APSRs. |
| Performance indicator | A measure of how a RSL is achieving its objectives. Performance Indicators can be compared with a pre-set standard (a benchmark) or with other organisations. |
| Performance Standards | Housing standards for all social landlords in Scotland. |
| Reasonable Preference categories | Homelessness, overcrowding, large families, living in below tolerable standard housing or unsatisfactory living conditions. |
| Registered social landlord (RSL) | A landlord providing social rented housing that is registered and regulated by Communities Scotland. |
| Re-lets | Lets made to the second or subsequent tenant. Distinguished from new lets that are made when the property is first built or modernised. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Right to Repair | A scheme which gives tenants legal rights to have certain repairs in defined times. |
| Section 5 referrals | Under Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 a local authority can request a registered social landlord which has accommodation in its area to provide accommodation to homeless people. This request is known as a Section 5 referral. |
| Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) | All property managed by registered social landlords must be brought up to a certain standard by 2015. |
| Scottish secure tenancy (SST) | The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 establishes the Scottish Secure Tenancy as the tenancy for all tenants of social landlords in Scotland. |
| & Short Scottish secure tenancy (SSST) | Section 34 and schedule 6 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 establish the basic conditions when a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy can apply to some tenants of social landlords in Scotland in place of a full SST |

Regulation & Inspection

EDINBURGH

Rosebery House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh EH12 5YA
Tel: 0131 313 3700

GLASGOW

Highlander House
58 Waterloo Street
Glasgow G2 7DA
Tel: 0141 226 4611