

Factsheet

About inspection: important information for councillors

What is this factsheet for?

This factsheet outlines how the Scottish Housing Regulator will involve local councillors in the inspection of local authority housing services.

What is the Scottish Housing Regulator?

The Scottish Housing Regulator is a government agency, reporting directly to Scottish Ministers. Our purpose is to:

- protect the interests of current and future tenants, and other service users;
- ensure the continuing provision of good quality social housing in terms of decent homes, good services, value for money and financial viability; and
- maintain the confidence of funders.

Why does the Scottish Housing Regulator carry out inspections?

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gives us responsibility for inspecting registered social landlords (RSLs) and the housing and homelessness functions of local authorities. Through our system of regulation, social landlords will be inspected against the same set of standards to ensure that tenants and other service users are being provided with the highest possible levels of service, regardless of who their landlord is.

What are our inspection objectives?

We want to encourage councils to improve their housing services and to ensure they are well run and accountable to their tenants and other users of their services. Through our inspections we seek to answer two key questions:



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- How good are the services?
- How well are they managed for improvement?

The answers to these two questions will be the basis for our inspection team's conclusions and the grades we award.

We focus on the quality of services. We want to get behind the paperwork to find out how good services actually are, and our inspections will take account of tenants' and other users' experiences of these services.

Our inspection may cover the following areas:

- Housing management services
- Property maintenance and asset management
- Homelessness services

We will assess performance in other areas through our other regulatory processes,

including thematic inspections and regular information collection. Where a council has transferred its houses to another landlord, our inspection will only cover homelessness services.

Our inspection will provide you with an informed, external assessment of your council's performance which you can use when setting future priorities.

How does the inspection process work?

There are three stages:

Stage one: preparation The first stage of the inspection involves us gathering and examining information about the organisation. This information will come from a range of sources, including the organisation's own assessment of its performance and the views of tenant organisations and partners. Once we have examined this information we will decide the

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things we need to look at in more detail. We allow up to 10 weeks for the preparation stage.

Stage two: on-site The second stage of the inspection involves our inspectors spending time in housing offices to gather the evidence we need to make our assessments. We will use a range of techniques to collect this evidence. The length of time we spend on-site will depend on the size and structure of the council.

Stage three: reporting Within three months of our last day on site we produce an inspection report giving our findings and recommendations. A few weeks later we will publish the report on our website. Where we receive a request for a review, the report will not be published until the review process has been completed.

Before our report is finalised we will give councillors and staff a chance to consider and discuss our findings, recommendations and

grades. Once our report has been finalised you will have a chance to ask for a review if you are unhappy about the assessment we have made and the grades we have awarded.

Where relevant, we will award grades for:

- housing management services
- property maintenance and asset management
- homelessness services

Where we make recommendations as a result of the inspection, we will expect the organisation to address these. Where we have assessed an area of an organisation's work as fair or poor, we will require it to produce an improvement plan showing how and when it will tackle our recommendations. In exceptional circumstances, if improvements don't happen and services and organisations remain poor, we have a range of direct intervention powers that we can use (such as appointing a special manager to your organisation).

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What part do councillors play in our inspections?

Because councillors have responsibility for agreeing strategy and policy for housing and other functions they will be an important source of information in our inspections of local authorities. Before starting the on-site period of our inspection we will provide a briefing session for councillors. This will give you the opportunity to raise any specific queries or concerns you have with us. During the on-site stage we will want to meet councillors to discuss their views of their organisation's major strengths and weaknesses and the priorities for action and improvement.

Following our inspection we expect that councillors will also be involved in agreeing the council's improvement plan.

Want to know more?

For more information about our inspections visit our website, www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk, where you can download a copy of our Guide To Inspection.

Availability in other formats

This document can be translated, on request, into your community language. Please phone 0141 271 3810 or email shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk.

يمكن ترجمة هذا المستند، لدى الطلب، إلى لغتك. يرجى الاتصال بالهاتف على رقم ٠١٤١ ٢٧١ ٣٨١٠ أو بالبريد الإلكتروني بالعنوان shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk

এই দলিলটা আপনি চাইলে আপনার কমিউনিটির ভাষায় অনুবাদ করা যেতে পারে। দয়া করে এখানে ফোন করুনঃ 0141 271 3810 অথবা এই ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করুনঃ shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk

這份資料可以為你翻譯成中文。請致電 0141 271 3810 或發送電子郵件至：shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk，要求獲得中文譯本。

گزارش پریہ دستاویز کمیونٹی کی زبانوں میں ترجمہ کروائی جا سکتی ہے۔ برائے مہربانی نمبر 0141 271 3810 پر فون کریں یا اس پتے پر ای میل بھیجیں : shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk

Możemy zapewnić tłumaczenie niniejszego dokumentu na Państwa język ojczysty, proszę zadzwonić pod 0141 271 3810 lub wysłać e-mail do shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk

