



**Scottish Housing
Regulator**



Information Pack

Volunteer Tenant Advisors Scottish Housing Regulator

January 2022

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) is delighted to invite applications for the recruitment of twelve motivated and enthusiastic individuals to take on the role of Tenant Advisor - and provide an independent and unique perspective on the work of the SHR.



www.housingregulator.gov.scot

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Introduction

Welcome to the information pack for the recruitment of **Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)** volunteer Tenant Advisors. The recruitment is by the SHR, with support of the **Tenants Information Service (TIS)**.

Committed to ensuring tenants are at the heart of the regulation of landlords, the SHR is delighted to invite applications for **the recruitment of twelve motivated and enthusiastic individuals to take on the role of Tenant Advisor** – and provide an independent and unique perspective on the work of the SHR.

Tenants of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Local Authorities from across Scotland, and all walks of life, are encouraged to apply for this voluntary position and **be instrumental in informing the future of social housing services in Scotland**.

This information pack explains what the SHR do, and how the SHR involves Tenant Advisors in their work.

The SHR is committed to promoting equality and human rights in how they regulate, because tenants and other service users of all backgrounds are at the heart of the work of the SHR. Specific consideration will be given to **protected characteristics** to ensure the group of Tenant Advisors is balanced, inclusive, and representative.

What are protected characteristics?

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

You are protected under the **Equality Act 2010** from these types of discrimination.

In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest or any unintentional bias; applications from current (and former) employees of: Registered Social Landlords, Local Authority housing departments, or Scottish Government social housing related posts **will not be considered for the role of Tenant Advisor**.

More broadly, the SHR will work to ensure that any conflict of interest is managed as appropriate. This will include asking successful applicants to declare any potential conflict.

The closing date is 10:00am, on Monday 14th February 2022.

How to apply

If this voluntary position interests you and you would like to be considered for selection as a Tenant Advisor, please complete an application form, and equal opportunities form, and return it to TIS by **10:00am, on Monday 14th February 2022**.

Appointment for the role of Tenant Advisors will commence on Friday 1st April 2022.

For further information, please contact TIS at:

T: 0141 248 1242 **E:** info@tis.org.uk

About the Scottish Housing Regulator

The **Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)** is the independent regulator of Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and local authority housing services in Scotland, working to safeguard and promote the interests of:

- Around 600,000 tenants who live in homes provided by social landlords.
- Over 120,000 owners who receive services from social landlords.
- Around 40,000 people and their families who experience homelessness and seek help from local authorities.
- Around 2,000 Gypsy/Travellers who can use official sites provided by social landlords.

The SHR's role is to gather, monitor, assess, and report on social landlords' performance of housing activities and RSLs' financial well-being and standards of governance, and to intervene where appropriate to achieve their objective. They also keep a public register of social landlords. You can learn more about the Scottish Housing Regulator at:

www.housingregulator.gov.scot

Why the Scottish Housing Regulator appoints Tenant Advisors

As the regulator of social housing in Scotland, **the SHR's job is to safeguard and promote the interests of tenants** – and they want to work with tenants in how they regulate landlords.

The **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001** created a **legal requirement for landlords to develop and support tenant participation**, and to produce a tenant participation strategy which will support "continuous improvement in landlords' performance in supporting and enabling tenants to participate".

The role of the SHR is to protect tenants' interests. The SHR can only do their job effectively if they understand what is important to tenants in what they regulate and how they regulate landlords.

Tenants are a diverse group with different needs and priorities, and it is important that the SHR work with tenants to understand these and take account of them in their work.

So, the SHR consult and involve tenants in a number of ways including their National Panel of Tenants and Service Users and their work with tenant representative bodies including the Regional Network SHR Liaison Group.

However, **it is also important that the SHR also understands the experiences and perspectives of individual tenants.** Tenants tell the SHR that they really appreciate and value the opportunity of being asked for their views by other tenants. And, by having tenants talk to tenants the SHR gets first-hand views about landlords.

Roles and responsibilities of a Tenant Advisor

Tenant Advisors are tenants of either Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) or Local Authorities, who volunteer to participate in the regulation work of the SHR. **They come from all walks of life and can live anywhere in Scotland.**

Tenant Advisors are volunteers - they are not employed by the SHR. This is important because it means that they are independent, and able to provide the SHR with a unique perspective on landlords, and the work of the SHR.

However, the SHR will pay Tenant Advisors a small allowance and **reimburse any reasonable expenses incurred** in carrying out their duties or attending training. Here are some examples of the types of work that the SHR may ask Tenant Advisors to be involved in:

- Testing landlord services by acting as mystery shoppers, assessing information and materials produced by landlords for their tenants.
- Reviewing SHR draft publications and website facilities and helping the SHR to make sure material is both accessible and user friendly for tenants.
- Asking other service users for their views when the SHR assess the quality of service provided by social landlords to give the SHR a direct, user perspective to add to other regulatory evidence.

Time commitment

The level of participation is up to Tenant Advisors. The activities that the SHR might ask Tenant Advisors to do will differ in terms of the time involved, whether it can be done from home, and whether it needs to be done during the day or evening.

Some tasks can be completed quickly, and others may take more time. The SHR will discuss your availability, preferences, and support needs with you and ensure that whatever they ask you to do fits with this.

Tenant Advisors are appointed for a period of 3 years, with the possibility of reappointment.

Why become a Tenant Advisor?

Tenant Advisors play an active role in improving the services provided by Scottish social landlords. You will have the opportunity to gain experience of working alongside SHR staff in a regulatory environment and the SHR will support you to:

- Develop your confidence.
- Develop new skills, knowledge, and experience of social housing.
- Network with other Tenants Advisors, services users, and people within social housing.
- Experience new challenges, and the chance to gain experience which will assist with personal and career development.

Skills, knowledge, and experience

You do not need any formal qualifications, training, or experience to become a Tenant Advisor.

First and foremost, the SHR wants people who are tenants of either RSLs or local authorities and are **passionate about improving the services provided by Scottish social landlords.** If that is you, we would welcome your application.

Although, the SHR do ask that you have the following skills:

- Good communication both written and orally.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Able to listen to other views and opinions and challenge others in an appropriate and constructive way.
- Able to interpret information from different documents and feedback.
- Excellent team player and can work as a team.
- Working knowledge of IT equipment, email, and word processing.

Additionally, the SHR are looking for individuals who will:

- Have a real interest in making a difference for social housing tenants in Scotland.
- Be a positive and direct influence on how the SHR carry out the regulation of social landlords.
- Input tenants' views into the development of regulation policy and practice.
- Actively listen to tenants and pick up on the issues which really matter to them.
- Provide evidence of tenants' views to present to a landlord.
- Highlight good practice in involving tenants in scrutiny.
- Work with the SHR in informing the regulatory process.

Training and support

The SHR will support you through every step of the way by **ensuring that you receive the right support to help you undertake your role as Tenant Advisor confidently**. The SHR will provide briefing and support on all tasks and will provide you with feedback - and ask you to give feedback about the role of Tenant Advisor.

How Tenant Advisors are selected

The recruitment of Tenant Advisors is an open and inclusive process. The SHR and TIS will coordinate the invitation and selection process. Applications will be appraised to ensure applicants have the necessary experience and commitment to confidently undertake their role.

The SHR is **committed to promoting equality and human rights in how it regulates** because tenants and other service users of all backgrounds are at the heart of its work. These rights mean that everyone should be treated fairly with dignity and respect. The SHR work to empower tenants and other service users, and to give them a voice. As such, there should be no limitations to anyone becoming a Tenant Advisor and the post holders and their insights should be as diverse as possible.

Specific consideration will be given to **protected characteristics** to ensure the group of Tenant Advisors is balanced, inclusive, and representative.

What are protected characteristics?

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You are protected under the **Equality Act 2010** from these types of discrimination.

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More broadly, the SHR will work to ensure that any conflict of interest is managed as appropriate. This will include asking successful applicants to declare any potential conflict.

The application process

All individuals will be notified on the outcome of their application.

You **may be invited to attend an informal interview** as part of the selection process. This will be held virtually, and its purpose is to find out more about you and why you would like to take on the role of Tenant Advisor.

It is anticipated that the informal interview process will take place on **Thursday 3rd or Tuesday 8th March 2022** - however, we may be able to offer some degree of flexibility around these dates if you are unavailable to attend.

Successful applicants will be asked to attend an induction day which will be held in a face-to-face or virtual capacity, based on current Covid-19 guidance, in May 2022.

Additionally, successful applicants will be **required to complete a Basic Disclosure certificate** prior to commencing their role as a Tenant Advisor.

How to apply

If this voluntary position interests you and you would like to be considered for selection as a Tenant Advisor, please complete an **application form** and **equal opportunities form** to TIS, either by email to:

E: info@tis.org.uk

Or alternatively, you can post both to the following address:

TIS: Clockwise Offices, 77 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, G2 3BZ

The application form and equal opportunities form are available on the SHR and TIS websites to download at:

→ www.housingregulator.gov.scot

→ www.tis.org.uk

Should you require a hardcopy of the application form and equal opportunities form then please contact TIS to arrange postage.

The closing date is 10:00am, on Monday 14th February 2022.