

Our regulation of social housing in Scotland

Discussion questions

We welcome your general feedback on our proposals as well as answers to the specific questions we have raised. You can read our discussion paper on our website at www.housingregulator.gov.scot
Please do not feel you have to answer every question unless you wish to do so.

Send your completed questionnaire to us by 11 August 2023.

By email @: regulatoryframeworkreview@shr.gov.scot

Or post to: Scottish Housing Regulator
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How you would like your response to be handled

To help make this a transparent process we intend to publish on our website the responses we receive, as we receive them. Please let us know how you would like us to handle your response. If you are responding as an individual, we will not publish your contact details.

Are you happy for your response to be published on our website?

Yes

No

If you are responding as an individual ...

Please tell us how you would like your response to be published.

Pick 1

Publish my full response, including my name

Please publish my response, but not my name

1. We believe that our regulatory priorities should be:
 - listening and responding effectively to tenants and service users
 - providing good quality and safe homes
 - keeping homes as affordable as possible
 - doing all they can to reduce the number of people who are experiencing homelessness

We are keen to hear your feedback on these priorities. Are they the right ones?

We believe so.

2. What are your views on amending the Statutory Guidance on Annual Assurance Statements to include provisions on specific assurance?

We have no issue with this; however, this should be aligned the annual Risk Assessment of the sector which the SHR publishes. It is also important that RSLs are given as much advance notice of the areas of focus as possible to allow for meaningful engagement with Boards

3. Do you think that we need to change any of the indicators in the ARC or add to these?

The indicators on Customer Satisfaction requires a more prescriptive methodology to effectively and fairly compare landlords. Fundamental to the purpose of any regulatory indicator is that tenants know how their landlord is performing against others. Different collection methodologies have significant impacts on results. For example, face to face surveys have a much higher satisfaction score, whereas online surveys show participants to be less satisfied. The different approaches taken by landlords could render any comparison between results useless and more concerning than that, they would be misleading for tenants.

We have taken external advice from the Royal Statistical Society – who have advised us,

"There is no way that results from different associations can meaningfully be compared unless the methodologies are very carefully specified to be identical. Ideally, there should be one firm conducting them across all associations. Indeed, trends over time for the same association could be misleading".

We believe that to address this a standard collection and analytical method should be prescribed for all landlords.

In addition, a three yearly survey does not give an accurate picture of how tenants perceive their landlord. These should be conducted more frequently but with prescribed methodologies.

4. Are the proposed areas of focus for tenant and resident safety indicators the right ones, and what should those indicators be?

They need to cover health and safety compliance across the RSL's assets,

5. What do you think would be the most effective and appropriate way to monitor the effectiveness of landlords' approach to managing reports and instances of mould and dampness?

The variation in severity of cases of damp and mould is significant and so any measures would have to be sophisticated enough to identify significant issues. Management should be linked to the overall condition of the assets and the wider asset management strategy which the Landlord has in place.

6. What are your views on strengthening the Framework further on landlords listening to tenants and service users?

We have no issues with this however this should be done in partnership with the SPSO.

7. How do you think we could streamline the requirements for landlords in the Notifiable Events statutory guidance?

No changes suggested

8. Do you think there is value in using more direct language in the working towards compliance status, or in introducing an intermediary regulatory status between compliant and working towards compliance?

This should be reflected in the monitoring of an RSLs engagement plan. We don't believe there is any requirement for further classifications

9. Are there any changes we should make to the Significant Performance Failures approach, including how we define these?

None

10. Are there any other changes to the Regulatory Framework and associated guidance that you would suggest?

We believe that the regulation of RSLs in relation to protecting the rights of our tenants is robust however there should be an assessment of governing bodies and their ability to govern the organisation as well as a financial viability rating. RSLs are multi-million-pound businesses and the regulator and the sector should be assured they are being effectively governed. We would support a rating system like G/V rating used by the Regulator of Social Housing in England.

Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback!