

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
2nd floor, George House
36 North Hanover Street, G1 2AD

Name/organisation name

Link Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP)

Address

| | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| c/o Link Housing, Watling House, Callendar Business Park, Falkirk | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Postcode FK1 1XR | Phone | Email |

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 | ✓ <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please publish my response, but not my name | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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?

Broadly speaking the TSP agree with the regulatory priorities listed. Its important to listen to tenants and in the past, this hasn't necessarily happened, in the sector, specifically in relation to dampness and mould.

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

The TSP agree with the Regulator's views to amend and strengthen the AAS and include specific assurance in relation to issues such as damp and mould. In addition, we feel there should be a formal role for tenants in the development of the AAS statement. For example, tenant scrutiny panels could provide Boards with assurance in relation to parts of the service that they have tested, or reviewed performance of indicators for.

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

Indicators should be added for issues relating to management of damp and mould.

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

Broadly speaking those are the correct safety indicators to focus on.

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?

Landlords must have clear policy and procedures. Timescales should be made clear to tenants along with arrangements for monitoring any work, ensuring that work done has been successful. The TSP feel it is important for landlords to work with tenants on communication, so they understand how damp and mould come about and how they are avoided and treated. Input from tenants will avoid any unintentional risk of the landlord's advice being interpreted as patronising or blaming damp and mould on tenants' lifestyles.

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

Tenant awareness of the Framework and Regulator could be improved. Landlords could help with this through their newsletters and websites. Membership of the SHR National Panel could also be promoted more effectively. The TSP feel the regulator should highlight good practice through thematic reviews and actively check that landlords have a range of ways for tenants to provide their views and receive feedback on how their views have been taken onboard.

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

The TSP agree with the proposal to streamline the requirements to focus on the more critical issues if the regulator is confident that the correct notifiable events are being reported to it.

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?*

The TSP feels it's important to introduce an intermediary statement because just saying 'not compliant' will affect a range of important issues such as borrowing powers, staff morale and tenant confidence in the landlord. This would have negative consequences for tenants.

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

The TSP has suggested that more clarity around the definition of Significant Performance Failures would be helpful for tenants. For example, the number/proportion of tenants that would need to be affected for an issue to be considered as a Significant Performance Failure. The TSP also suggests that the Regulator continues to highlight the difference between individual complaints and Significant Performance Failures.

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

The TSP suggest increasing the number and diversity of assessors. In addition to diversity across protected characteristics, geographic representation (including urban and rural) should be considered.

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