Service Improvement Plan 2024 - 2025



Introduction

This document sets out the Housing Service's plans to deliver high-quality and customer focussed services to our tenants and other service users, supporting the mission of the service to 'create places that people are proud to call home' and the vision within the <u>Angus Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023 – 2027</u> that 'everyone in Angus has a good quality, safe, secure and warm home that they can afford'.

Housing Service improvement priorities have been identified through our Annual Return of the Charter and subsequent Annual Engagement Plan with the Scottish Housing Regulator as well as customer feedback from our 2023 Tenant Satisfaction Survey and an evaluation of customer complaints. The Improvement Plan sets out how we will make improvements against these priorities and how we will measure and report progress to ensure we can deliver against our mission and provide a consistently high-quality service to our customers.

Many of the challenges being faced by the Service are part of a wider set of issues being experienced across the housing sector, particularly those related to homelessness, availability of housing supply, rent arrears and voids. These strategic and systemic issues are coupled with some unique challenges for Angus resulting from multiple service reviews (Community Housing Teams and Homelessness) which have impacted on the Service's resilience, serious contract failures and changes to the allocation policy. The severe flooding from Storm Babet in October 2023 impacted a significant number of households, homes and infrastructure, leading to the Service implementing an emergency response and refocussing activities on the delivery of a recovery strategy. This means that while the overall trends in relation to performance reductions are consistent with what is being experienced right across the country, Angus has started from a lower base and the implementation of improvement activities was paused to focus on the recovery efforts.

The Improvement Plan is therefore ambitious and recognises the need to undertake several key programmes of work concurrently due to the interdependencies of the actions required to refocus and improve service delivery, improve efficiency and performance and ensure regulatory and legislative compliance.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the Housing Service Improvement Plan are:

- Services built and led around people.
- Consistency in service delivery.
- Effective leadership.
- Improvement driven by incremental change.
- Evidence based decision making.
- Team working.
- Sustainable service delivery.

This will be done by:

- Understanding our customers' needs, involving people in decisions and listening and learning from customer, elected member, staff and stakeholders' experience of housing services.
- Ensuring customers receive the same high level of service across all interactions with the service and receive the same level of quality each time they reach out for assistance.
- Encouraging staff to participate and empowering staff to take ownership and engage in implementation of changes.
- Setting realistic, short-term goals, aligned to the strategic vision of the Council and Service.
- Focusing on making gradual and small changes rather than making big changes all at once.
- Measuring impact of changes and continuing to make any necessary changes to achieve desired results to ensure changes are driven by data and are evidence based.
- Working collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to identify and deliver improvements to housing services.
- Designing and providing services in a way that fosters economic, social, and environmental well-being.

ousing Service	Improvement Plan on a Page	Creati	ing Places People are Proud to Call Hor
Our Vision	Everyone in Angus	has a good quality, safe, secure and warm home	that they can afford
Our Values	Collaboration Fairr	Focus on People Integrals	• Respect
Guiding Principles	Services are built and led around people Drive incremental change	Consistency in service delivery Evidence based decision making Team working	Effective leadership Sustainable service delivery
	Customer Excellence	Housing Quality and Place	Prevention and Homelessness
Service provement priorities	 Improve customer satisfaction and reduce complaints. Reduce incidents of serious rent arrears. Develop our approach to asset if future investment decisions. Deliver the contracts for voids a 	Develop our approach to asset management to inform	 Deliver statutory duties in relation to homelessness and ensure the service contributes to the aims of ending homelessness together. Ensure the housing service is meeting the needs of vulnerable groups.
		Delivery of the Local Housing Strategy	
	A programme	e of continuous improvement is embedded within the Housin	g Service
Enablers	 Develop and implement a performance managen Develop a communication plan for the service Develop 3 – 5 year service improvement plan. Agree approach to reviewing the business plan in 	nent framework. n line with improvement and asset management plans.	
		Development of a Digital Strategy	
	Develop a digital strategy and implementation pl Oversee the Operational Level Agreement for the		

Identifying the Priorities for Improvement

The Annual Return on the Charter

Each year, we are required to report our performance against the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator and our customers. The purpose of the ARC is to demonstrate we are meeting our statutory obligations in relation to housing and to monitor performance against a range of indicators to ensure quality and value for money for tenants and customers for the services they receive. Performance against the ARC Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is outlined from page 15.

Following the ARC, the Scottish Housing Regulator publishes an annual engagement plan which outlines why they are working with each landlord, what the landlord needs to do and what it needs to provide. This year, the Regulator are engaging with Angus on the following:

• Services for People who are Homeless

- the ongoing impact of Storm Babet on the delivery of homelessness services and, in particular, on the implementation of the transfer of the services to the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership
- o the provision of temporary accommodation to people who are homeless; and
- outcomes for people who are homeless.

Service Quality

- o Complaints handling
- Void management; and
- o Rent arrears recovery.

Stock Quality and Resident and Tenant Safety

- Managing associated risks from reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)
- o Compliance with electrical safety and fire detection requirements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS); and
- Quality of asset management data.

We are providing regular updates to the Regulator on how we are addressing these concerns. The engagement plan is published here.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023

All social housing providers are required to collect and report on a number of satisfaction measures at part of the ARC, covering; overall satisfaction, value for money, keeping tenants informed, opportunities to participate, quality of homes, and management of the neighbourhood.

We commissioned The Knowledge Partnership to undertake our 2023 Tenant Satisfaction Survey. The Knowledge Partnership interviewed 1000 customers by phone between September 2023 and November 2023. The aim of the survey was to seek tenants' views on the services that Angus Council provides as a landlord, how well we perform these services and to help identify areas where the service can be improved.

Overall, we saw a fair set of results, with overall satisfaction at 71.2% which is close to the Council sector average where phone surveys have been used. However, overall satisfaction rates have reduced by 16.8% from the previous survey completed in 2020 - which saw the highest ever tenant satisfaction levels recorded for Angus. Three key improvement themes were identified from the results: contact, communication and engagement; maintenance and upgrades; and management of the neighbourhood, including housing officer visibility, landscaping, improving communal areas and fly tipping and handling anti-social behaviour.

The findings from the survey have informed the priorities and actions within the Improvement Plan.

Learning from Complaints

An analysis of Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints received by the Housing Service was undertaken in April 2024. Although the number of Stage 1 complaints has reduced from 227 in 2022/23 to 189 in 2023/24, the number of Stage 2 complaints have increased from 6 to 13 in the same period. Consistent with the Tenant Satisfaction Survey findings, the most common themes for complaints in 2023/24 are repairs and maintenance (39%) and communication (also 39% of complaints received). Other common themes for complaints include allocations (9%) and anti-social behaviour (8% of complaints received).

Our Plan for Improvement

Continuous Improvement

Goal	Milestones	Timescale for delivery	What does success look like?
	Develop and implement governance and reporting arrangements for delivery of Service Improvement Plan.	30 April 2024	Delivery of our 1- year service
	Review and implement revised performance management framework.	30 June 2024	improvement plan complete. A programme of
An ongoing programme of	Develop approach to ensure data integrity and implement programme of data validation checks.	30 June 2024	data validation checks is underway
continuous improvement is embedded in the Housing Service.	Develop a Communication Plan for the service: -Complete transition to SharepointReview use of communication tools to enhance sharing of information and engagement with customers, staff and elected members.	30 September 2024	Our performance management framework fully embedded.
	Undertake a service wide training needs analysis and develop a training plan.	30 September 2024	Our 3–5-year service
	Develop 3-5 year Service Improvement Plan.	31 December 2024.	improvement plan
	Agree approach to reviewing the business plan in line with improvement and asset management plans.	31 December 2024	will be agreed. A PID and project
	Undertake full service review.	31 March 2025.	plan for reviewing the business plan will be agreed.

Our Plan for Improvement

Customer Excellence

Goal	Milestones	Timescale for delivery	What does success look like?
	Review tenant satisfaction survey results and engage with staff to identify areas for improvement. Undertake thematic analysis of complaints to identify priorities for improvement.	30 April 2024 30 April 2024	Increase in percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord. Increase in percentage of
Improve customer satisfaction and	Implement coastal / landward CHT delivery model for testing – introduce buddy system, review patch areas, increase admin support, introduce peripatetic Housing Officers	30 June 2024	
reduce complaints	Develop and implement a Customer Charter and Service Standards	30 June 2024	tenants who feel
	Map and review the internal complaints handling process (involving stakeholders) and identify areas for improvement, ensuring stage one complaints are resolved at the front line where possible and lessons learned are captured and shared.	30 June 2024	their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions. Increase in percentage of
	Map elected member enquiry process and identify areas for improvement.	30 June 2024	

	Review support available for customers applying for housing – promote support available.	30 June 2024	tenants satisfied with the opportunities given
	Implement a consistent approach to recording customer contacts, to enable us to monitor whether the service standards are being met.	30 September 2024	to them to participate in their landlord's decision-
	Implement revised Common Allocations Policy.	31 October 2024	making processes.
	Develop and implement revised Tenant Participation Strategy and delivery plan.	31 December 2024	Reduction in number of complaints – stage
	Develop and implement approach to capture customer feedback in an ongoing way.	31 December 2024	1 and stage 2. Increase in % of
	Review, develop and implement policies, processes and procedures by:	Ongoing	complaints responded to –
	 Creating a register of policies, processes and procedures Identify gaps and opportunities for improvement by: Learning from good practice; Undertaking customer journey mapping; Learning from complaints; 		stage 1 and stage 2. Reduction in average time in working days to respond to
	- Learning from tenant satisfaction survey.		complaints – stage 1 and stage 2.
	Review learning from evaluation of eviction cases to identify areas for improvement.	30 June 2024	Increase in rent collected as percentage of total
	Undertake mapping of customer journeys, involving key stakeholders, to understand what is working well, what is	30 September 2024	rent.
Reduce incidences of serious rent arrears – review rent arrears recovery	challenging and areas for improvement. Develop improvement plan.		Reduction in gross rent arrears (all

approaches to ensure a preventative approach is taken	Review and implement revised year end write off process.	31 December 2024	tenants) as a percentage of rent due.
	Review and implement revised sequestration write off process.	31 December 2024	Reduction in amount and percentage of
	Review Service Level Agreement with Welfare Rights.	31 March 2025	former tenant rent arrears written off at the year end.

Housing			
Our Plan for Improvement			
Housing Quality and Place			
Goal	Milestones	Timescale for delivery	What does success look like?
Ensure Compliance with SHQS	Delivery of existing contracts to achieve full compliance with Electrical Installations and Smoke and Heat Alarms requirements.	30 September 2024	Increase in percentage of homes meeting the
	Procurement of new contracts to ensure ongoing compliance with Electrical Installations and Smoke and Heat Alarms requirements.	30 September 2024	Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).
	Implement approach to management of adaptations data so that stock can be allocated or matched to make the best use of existing stock.	30 June 2024	Reduction in percentage of rent due lost through

Develop our approach to asset management to ensure we have a comprehensive understanding of our assets as well as the needs and aspirations of our tenants to inform future investment decisions.	Review and implement capital and planned maintenance programmes (including governance and monitoring arrangements). Implement roof inspection programme for properties affected by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). Complete an options appraisal for properties affected by RAAC. Complete an options appraisal for flood damaged housing stock in	30 June 2024 30 June 2024 31 March 2025 30 September 2024	homes being empty. Average time to relet properties in the last year. Increase in percentage of
	Brechin. Review the void processes to ensure a more efficient turnaround of voids, ensuring that properties are occupied, and void rent loss is reduced.	30 September 2024	existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home. Percentage of
	Asset Management System under development and implementation plan in place.	31 March 2025	tenants who feel that the rent for their property represents good value for money.
	Review and implement new governance arrangements for repairs contract monitoring and performance monitoring (Repairs & Voids Board).	30 June 2024	Reduction in average length of time taken to complete
	Review lessons learned from the current and previous contracts including in relation to contractor performance.	30 June 2024	emergency repairs. Reduction in
Successful delivery of contracts for	Review existing contract administration processes and implement quick wins: -Training delivered to CHT staff on contract administration processes -Review and implement processes to reduce variations	30 June 2024	average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs.

voids and unplanned repairs.	-Implement new timeframes for voids that require complex work -Introduce simplified schedule of rates for kitchen and bathroom replacements		Increase in percentage of reactive repairs
	Retender Forfar/ Kirriemuir voids and repairs contract: -test separate contracts for voids and unplanned repairs (different contractors) -test delivery of void works through Housing Asset team, instead of CHT. Complete options appraisal to agree delivery method for future voids and unplanned repairs contract (commencing April 2026). Procurement authority obtained for future voids and unplanned repairs contracts (commencing April 2026).	30 September 2024 31 December 2024 31 March 2025	carried out that were completed right first time. Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.
Improve customer satisfaction in the quality of our neighbourhoods.	Implement calendar of estate walkabouts to identify environmental improvements, involving other community partners and Assets. Review service level agreements with Parks, Waste and Environmental Health to ensure value for money and achieving smart achievable outcomes.	30 June 2024 30 September 2024	Increase in percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood they live in.

Our Plan for Improvement

Prevention and Homelessness

Goal	Milestones	Timescale for delivery	What does success look like?
	Relaunch multi agency Section 11 case management group to consider different approaches to prevent homelessness for tenants and home-owners subject to repossession action.	30 June 2024	Reduction in the number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. Reduction in
	Review and implement revised Rent Deposit Scheme.	30 June 2024	
	Review and implement revised Housing Options for Care Leavers Protocol.	30 June 2024	number of homeless applications.
Deliver statutory duties in relation to homelessness and ensure services contribute to the aims of ending	Implementation of additional housing resource to support Whole Family Wellbeing project.	30 September 2024	Reduction in percentage of
homelessness together	Complete analysis of supply and demand to ensure adequate supply of temporary homeless accommodation.	30 September 2024	PREVENT approaches where
	Review and implement revised SHORE (prison) protocol.	30 September 2024	outcome is 'made a homeless application'.
	Undertake 1 year evaluation of implementation of homeless service within AHSCP and identify areas for improvement.	31 December 2024	Percentage of new tenancies to

	Finalise development and implement youth homelessness strategy.	31 December 2024	existing tenants sustained for more than a year.
	Implement revised Domestic Abuse Policy.	31 December 2024	
	Implement Harassment Policy.	31 December 2024	
	Develop and implement an assurance framework to ensure ongoing compliance with recommendations from Significant Case Reviews.	30 June 2024	Recommendations from SCRs embedded into
Ensure the housing service is meeting the needs of vulnerable groups	Review and implement revised process for assessing rehousing needs for people with a physical or mental health need, which is impacted by their housing.	30 September 2024	Trauma informed approach embedded into
	Develop and implement a service wide approach to trauma informed practice.	30 September 2024	practice.

Our Plan for Improvement

Digital

Goal	Milestones	Timescale for delivery	What does success look like?
	Agree the Operational Level Agreement with Digital Enablement & IT for 2024/25.	30 April 2024	Application availability and access targets.
Delivery of the Operational Level	Implementation of ASB case management system. Capture learning for future development of customer service module and task manager.	31 May 2024	Response times to incidents.
Agreement with Digital Enablement and IT for supportive housing	Phase 1 launch of housing online (rents and repairs).	30 June 2024	Response times to requests.
applications.	Phase 2 launch of housing online (Choice Based Lettings). Development of Dashboards.	30 September 2024 31 December 2024	
	Implementation of ADAX (Paperless Direct Debits)	31 December 2024	
	Implementation of GDPR module on NEC	31 March 2025	
	Implementation of landlord registration case management system	31 March 2025	
Develop a digital strategy and implementation plan for the service.	Review opportunities for digital solutions within NEC including those which can streamline work processes, task management and record keeping, i.e. customer contacts, equipment needs.	30 September 2024	Digital strategy in

Agree priorities for the future development of NEC in line with service requirements and resources.	31 December 2024	place.
Develop strategy and implementation plan.	31 March 2025	

Monitoring our Performance

Performance reporting for 2023/24 is ongoing and the data provided may be subject to change following validation from Scotland's Housing Network. Performance targets for 2024/25 will be set by the Housing Delivery Groups when the data for 2023/24 is confirmed and national data is published for benchmarking, anticipated late June 2024.

*The satisfaction measures are reported from the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey which was undertaken in 2023 having previously been completed with tenants in 2020.

		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Performance	2022/23
Customer Excellence							Scottish
							Average
	*Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord.	88.04%	88.04%	88.04%	71.20%	Declined	81.95%
	*Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions.	94.02%	94.02%	94.02%	64.70%	Declined	85.02%
	*Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in their landlord's decision making	93.02%	93.02%	93.02%	41.40%	Declined	80.88%
Improve customer	processes.						

satisfaction and reduce complaints	Number of complaints (stage 1) received in the reporting year.	103	89	198	157	Improved	175.41
	Number of complaints (stage 2) received in the reporting year.	5	11	12	12	Maintained	24
	Average Time taken in working days to provide a response for stage 1 complaints.	5.16	1.32	8.57	5.93	Improved	7.95
	Average Time taken in working days to provide a response for stage 2 complaints.	16.25	4.78	20.6	25.7	Declined	24.01
	Percentage of Stage 1 complaints closed as resolved.	Not available	Not available	Not available	11.6%	N/A – new indicator	Not available
Reduce incidences of serious rent	Rent collected as a percentage of total rent.	106.76%	102.36%	99.51%	97.35%	Declined	98.83%
arrears – review rent arrears recovery approaches to ensure a preventative approach is taken	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year.	8.49%	9.68%	11.55%	10.9%	Improved	9.59%
	Percentage of former tenant rent arrears written off at the year end.	57.59%	70.34%	32.94%	59.96%	Declined	22.60%

		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Performance	2022/23
Housing Quality and Place							Scottish
							Average
Ensure compliance	Percentage of stock meeting the Scottish	94.24%	70.67%	56.66%	72.31%	Improved	70.91%
with SHQS	Housing Quality Standard.						
	*Percentage of tenants satisfied with the	86.04%	86.04%	86.04%	74.70%	Declined	81.14%
Develop our	quality of their home.						
approach to asset	*Percentage of tenants who feel that the	86.04%	86.04%	86.04%	72.40%	Declined	81.27%
management	rent for their property represents good						
	value for money.						
	Percentage of rent due lost through	4.43%	3.74%	2.02%	1.65%	Improved	1.73%
	properties being empty during the last						
	year.						
	Average number of days to re-let	51.46	53.49	76.21	62.4	Improved	66.94
	properties in the last year.						
	Average length of time taken to complete	12.85	14.52	9.32	5.98	Improved	4.70
	emergency repairs.	hours	hours	hours	hours		hours
	Average length of time taken to complete	13.83	14.16	9.34	8 days	Improved	9.68 days
Successful delivery	non-emergency repairs.	days	days	days			
of the contracts for voids and							
voius anu							

unplanned repairs.	Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time.	70.56%	28.97%	80.17%	99.99%	Improved	88.19%
	*Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.	81.71%	89.71%	99.76%	73.29%	Declined	88.51%
Improve customer satisfaction in the quality of our	*Percentage of tenants satisfied with the landlord's contribution to the management of the neighbourhood they live in.	91.72%	91.72%	91.72%	64.40%	Declined	82.08%
neighbourhoods	The number of cases of anti-social behaviour reported in the reporting year	1324	897	736	649	Improved	240
	The number of anti-social behaviour cases resolved in the reporting year	1324	897	692	579	Declined	223
	Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported in the last year which were resolved	100%	100%	94%	89%	Declined	91.43%

Preve	ntion and Homelessness	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Performance	2022/23 Scottish Average
	Percentage of new tenancies to existing tenants sustained for more than a year.	93.55%	85.11%	87.80%	92.96%	Improved	91.14%
	Number of homeless applications.	499	538	614	471	Improved	1218
Deliver statutory duties in relation to homelessness and ensure services contribute to the aims of ending homelessness together	Number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order.	0	3	5	27	Declined	110
	Percentage of Prevention approaches where outcome is 'made a homeless application'.	27.19%	16.80%	22.27%	33.01%	Declined	51.91%
	Average time (days) from assessment to closure for applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness.	209	149	154	TBC	ТВС	266
	Average length of time (days) per placement in temporary accommodation by type (All)	185	141.3	155	139.5	Improved	223

Governance and Reporting Arrangements

The service improvement priority areas have formed the basis of new governance arrangements for the Housing Service. Six Housing Delivery groups have been established to manage the delivery of the respective improvement activities and performance management framework. The Delivery groups will report progress to the Housing Management Team who will ensure that changes and improvements are being delivered operationally. The Housing Leadership team will have overall responsibility for the success and direction of the improvement plan and will have visibility of performance and progress against the milestones agreed.

The Service currently provides an annual update to the Communities Committee in September or October each year on the Council's performance in relation to housing services and provides information to support members to agree the annual assurance statement required by the Scottish Housing Regulator. Additional quarterly reports outlining progress against the Improvement Plan will be provided to Committee.