

Landlord Report to Tenants 2017

CUSTOMER
APPROVED



Context Indicators

Indicator C17

Stock by House Type, Apartment Sizes and Average Weekly Rents

	House	High Rise	Tenement	Four in a Block	Other Flat/Maisonette	Total	Nos of Lettable Units	Average Weekly Rent	Scottish Average
1 APT	0	0	0	0	69	69	62	£43.77	£66.55
2 APT	600	362	320	395	938	2,615	2,585	£51.29	£71.67
3 APT	2,793	616	1,629	2,701	902	8,641	8,567	£60.74	£73.13
4 APT	3,342	0	473	436	214	4,465	4,456	£68.62	£79.42
5+ APT	434	0	3	41	17	495	495	£78.27	£88.02
Total	7,169	978	2,425	3,573	2,140	16,285	16,165	£61.87	£74.44

Indicator C21

Percentage rent increase in 2016/17



Although our percentage increase is above the overall landlord average, our rent levels continue to be amongst the lowest nationally. Falkirk Council's average rent charge for a property is the 5th lowest of all Scottish Local Authorities.



Welcome to Falkirk Council's fourth Landlord Report.

Whether you are a tenant or simply use the Housing Service for some other reason, it is important that you know how we perform as a landlord. This report is designed to provide you with information on how your Housing Service is performing.

The report was written in consultation with the Tenants' & Residents' Forum and Housing Services' Scrutiny Panel. It does not include all the information that we report to the Scottish Housing Regulator. However, it does include all the information that the forum and scrutiny panel felt you would be most interested in. The customer Editorial Panel helped by making sure the information is laid out in a way that is easy to understand and is written in plain English.

The content of the report follows the themes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and provides performance information on:

- **Our relationship with you, our customers**
- **The quality of housing we provide you with and how well we maintain our homes**
- **How we manage your neighbourhood and community**
- **How our customers can access housing and support they need**
- **Whether the rent we charge, or other service charges we make, represents value for money**
- **What other customers (for example travelling people) think of the service we provide**

If you want to check how we compare with other landlords across Scotland, you can visit the Scottish Housing Regulator's website at <http://www.scottishhousingregulator.co.uk>

I hope you find the information in the report useful and easy to understand. If you want to know more or be involved in scrutinising our performance, you can call Alan Christie (Community Engagement Co-ordinator) on 01324 590796 or by emailing inspector.tenant@falkirk.gov.uk

Stuart Ritchie
Director of Corporate & Housing Services

We have set out our Charter performance in each area against the Scottish Average under each performance indicator.

Graphics are indicative and not to scale.

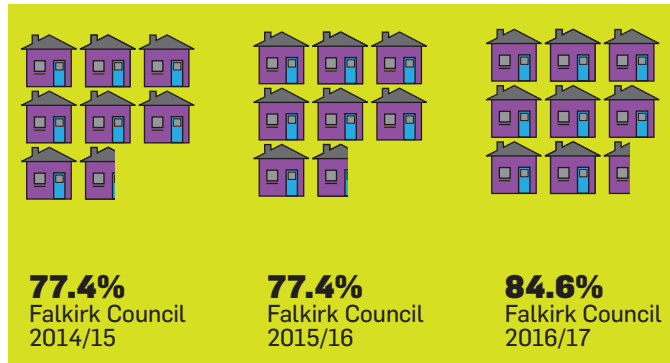
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Customer - Landlord Relationship

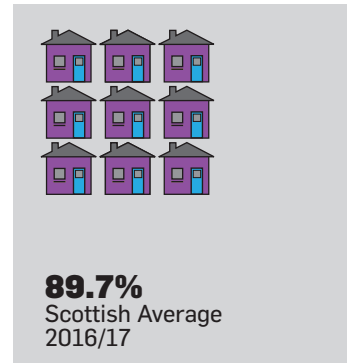
Indicator 1 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord

Our last large-scale tenant satisfaction survey was carried out in November/December 2016. This involved face-to-face interviews with 1,001 tenants drawn from a representative sample. The survey told us that 84.6% of tenants were satisfied with the overall service provided by Falkirk Council as landlord. This is an improvement of 7.2% compared to 2015/16.



This improvement is mainly because we have listened to what tenants have told us. For example, they told us that we needed to be better at communicating about things

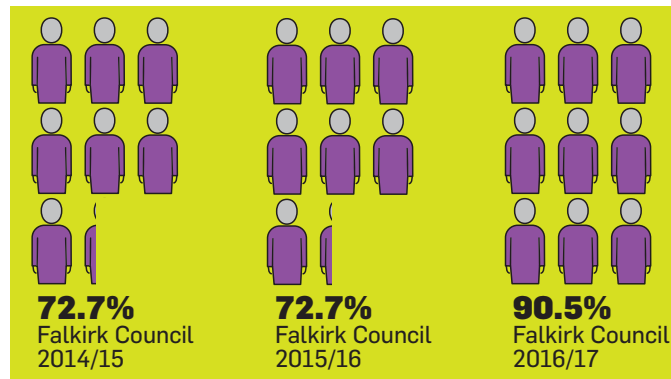
like progress with repairs and complaints. To make this better we introduced real-time updates to keep people informed.



Indicator 3 Percentage of tenants who feel we are good at keeping them informed about our services and decisions

In December 2016 the Housing Service carried out a large-scale tenant satisfaction survey. This involved 1,001 tenants selected at random making sure it was a representative sample of geographical areas, age groups, family compliment and property type.

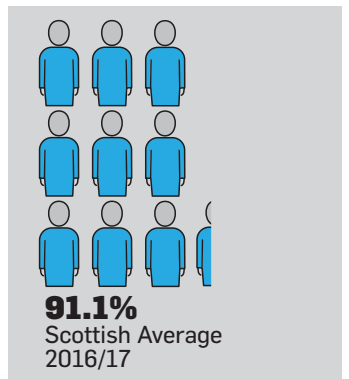
The survey told us that 90.5% of our customers felt that we were good at keeping them informed about services and decisions. This compares to



72.7% when our last tenant satisfaction survey was carried out.

Over the last few years we have put a lot of effort into improving our communication by setting up an Editorial Panel

made up of tenant and customer representatives. We have also set up an officers' communications group so we are working better together. These groups have worked to make sure information is relevant and

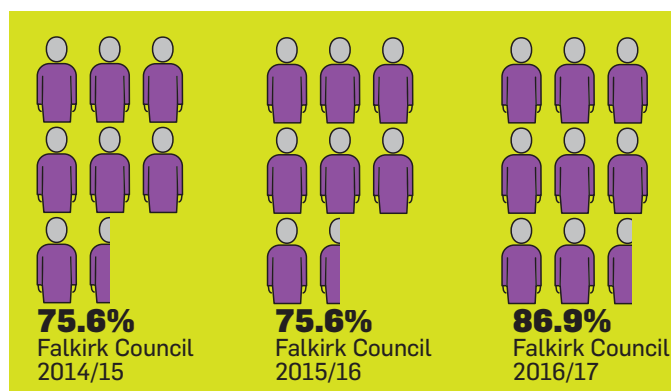


consistent across all the methods used to communicate. For example on the website, in the magazine 'Tenant Talk', in leaflets, handbooks and plasma screens in Housing offices etc.

Indicator 6 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in their landlord's decision making processes

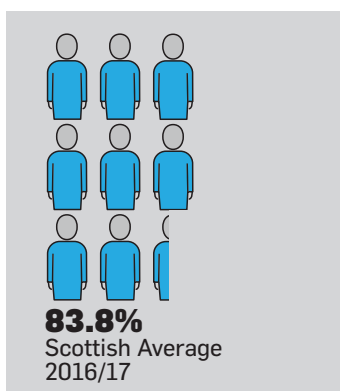
The Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy (2016 - 2019) was written taking account of the views of over 1,000 tenants. The Tenants' & Residents' Forum and Registered Tenants Organisations were also involved.

Taking account of all the views collected, the strategy follows four main themes. These are Communication, Engagement, Participation & Scrutiny. We



also used information gathered from the TPAS Accreditation process so we could make sure that we were involving our customers more effectively. In December 2016 the Housing Service carried out a large-scale tenant satisfaction

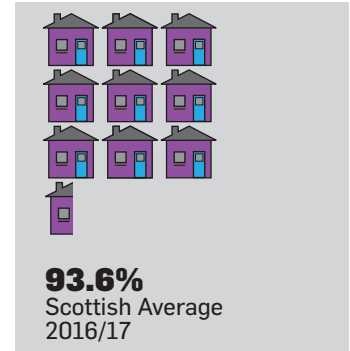
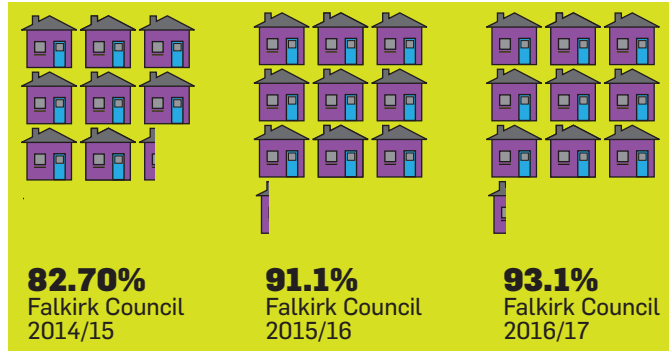
survey. This involved 1,001 tenants selected at random. The survey told us that 86.9% of our tenants were satisfied with the opportunities given them to participate. This is an improvement from 75.6% previously.



Housing Quality & Maintenance

Indicator 7 Percentage of our stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

We have increased the proportion of homes meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) from 91.1% in 2015/16 to 93.1% which is in line with the average reported for all Scottish Landlords in 2016/17. The remaining 6.9% is due to exemptions and abeyances. Work is ongoing to reduce the number of exemptions and abeyances which are primarily due to tenants refusing or not



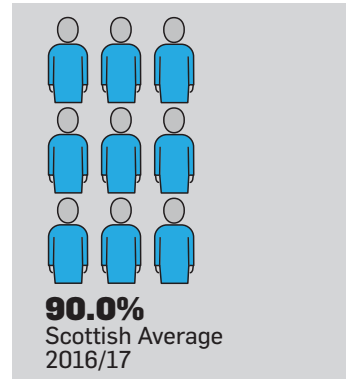
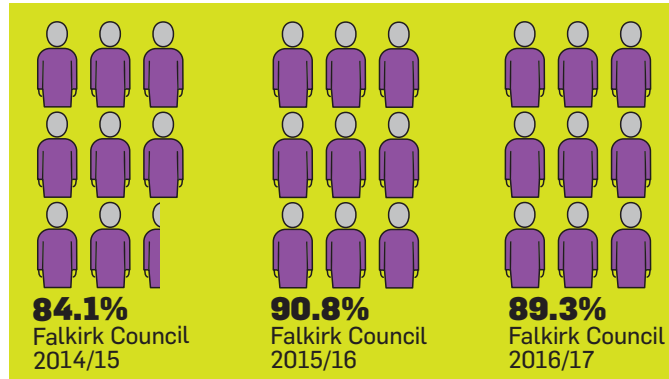
allowing access to install new efficient heating systems. We will continue to liaise with tenants on a one to one basis and provide support and assistance with

documentation, administration of changing supplier, installing meters to allow new heating to be installed.

Indicator 9 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in

Following consultation with our Customer Scrutiny Panel we introduced a new standard for re-letting void properties on the 1st April 2015; this has assisted improving performance over from the 84.1% reported in 2014/15. We now complete all repairs during the void stage of the re-let process, ensuring that during the transitional stage of entering a new home our tenants are settled with a minimum amount of disruption.

We completed a pilot scheme in Falkirk, Dawson and



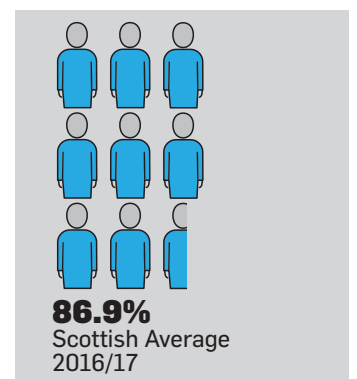
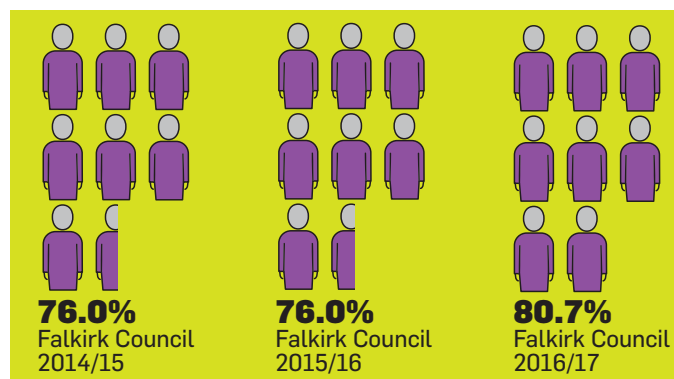
Camelon where the tenant has one point of contact, who will meet with the tenant, taking them through the void standard to the point of sign off. This inclusive approach has ensured that our tenants are happy with the standard of their home when moving in. There is evidence that the

work being done within the pilot area has had a positive effect on satisfaction levels. For the year end 2016/17 the reported performance for the pilot area was 94.6% which is significantly higher than the areas out with the pilot.

This pilot has now moved to the Denny area so that the Council can be confident that the improvements reported within the original pilot can be replicated.

Indicator 10 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of their home

Levels of satisfaction have improved, as we are continuing to carry our significant improvements to our existing houses through our Investment Programme. Over the next three years, £51.5m of investment is planned and includes improvements such as: roofing and roughcasting; insulation measures; kitchen and bathroom replacement, electrical safety checks and installation of new heating systems.

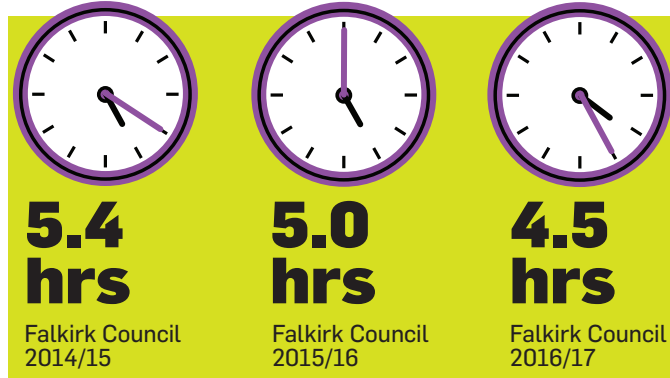


Housing Quality & Maintenance

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Indicator 11 Average time to complete Emergency repairs (in hours)

The council reported further improvements in the average time taken to complete emergency repairs from 5 hours in 2015/16 to an average of 4.5 hours in 2016/17. We completed emergency repairs on average just over an hour less than the target of 5.5 hours during 2016/17. The continual



development of the IT mobile solution for allocating emergency repairs has assisted in reducing this timescale.



Indicator 12 Average length of time to complete non-emergency repairs (in days)

We have reported continuous improvement in our performance during the three reporting years, from an average of 11.8 days in 2014/15 to 8.9 days in 2016/17 an improvement on average of 2.9 days.

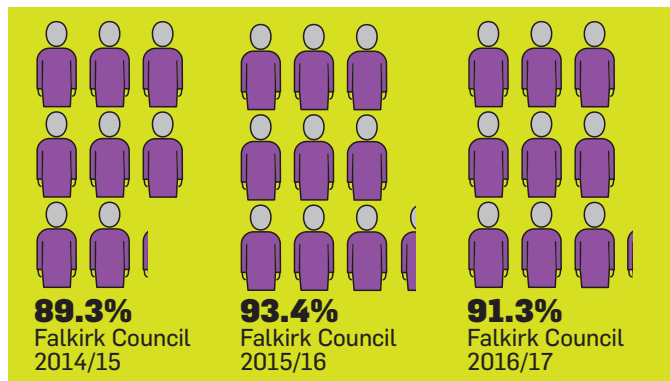


We are currently in the process of introducing a mobile working solution for reactive repairs which will include improvements to our appointment scheduling process. This will improve the way in which we schedule non-emergency repairs and have a further positive impact on our performance against this indicator.



Indicator 16 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service

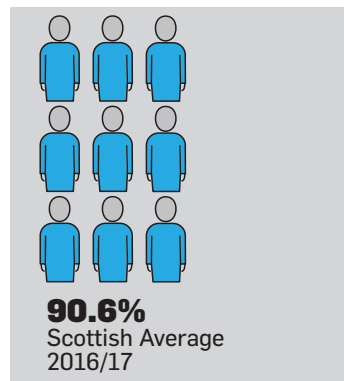
The overall figure for 2016/17 showed a satisfaction level of 91.3%, although slightly down on the 2015/16 figure of 93.4%, it remains above the current national average of 90.6% as reported by the Scottish Housing Regulator for all social Landlords (2016/17).



provided additional customer care training to staff and tradespersons.

In line with the request made by our tenants we now collect

repairs satisfaction information using our transactional surveys which are aligned with the Charter Indicator. The introduction of revised data capture and scheduling



methods should allow us to improve on current levels of satisfaction.

We have taken positive steps to improve our repairs appointment and work scheduling systems and have

Neighbourhood & Community

We continue to maintain a high level of performance in answering complaints. We always aim to answer all complaints received in full, but there will be a small number of cases where we are unable to respond. We only receive a low number of complaints relating to equalities. Although the figure shows less 1st Stage complaints about equalities responded to in full, this relates to only one case where we could not contact the customer.

We responded to less 1st stage complaints within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)'s timescale this year. The administration of complaints has recently moved to a centralised team, which we hope will reduce delays in complaints handling.

The number of 2nd stage complaints responded to within the SPSO's timescale has improved significantly year on year, and we aim to improve

this next year as well. We sometimes cannot answer complaints within the required timescales, and will agree an extension to the timescale if this is the case. This is not reflected in these figures, but further information on this is available in the Council's complaints report, available here www.falkirk.gov.uk/contact-us/complaints.

Indicator 4a:

Percentage of 1st stage complaints on equalities issues responded to in full by the landlord.



100%

Falkirk Council
2014/15



91.7%

Falkirk Council
2015/16



80%

Falkirk Council
2016/17

Indicator 4b:

Percentage of 1st stage complaints on other issues responded to in full by the landlord.



96.8%

Falkirk Council
2014/15



93.1%

Falkirk Council
2015/16



94.9%

Falkirk Council
2016/17

Indicator 4c:

Percentage of 2nd stage complaints on equalities issues responded to in full by the landlord.



100%

Falkirk Council
2014/15



No complaints

Falkirk Council
2015/16



No complaints

Falkirk Council
2016/17

Indicator 4d:

Percentage of 2nd stage complaints on other issues responded to in full by the landlord.



90%

Falkirk Council
2014/15



97.6%

Falkirk Council
2015/16



94.8%

Falkirk Council
2016/17

Indicator 5a:

Percentage of 1st Stage complaints that were answered within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman recommended timescale (5 days)

75.8%

Falkirk Council
2014/15

92.5%

Falkirk Council
2015/16

89.6%

Falkirk Council
2016/17

Indicator 5b:

Percentage of 2nd Stage complaints that were answered within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman recommended timescale (20 days)

65.3%

Falkirk Council
2014/15

74.1%

Falkirk Council
2015/16

86.3%

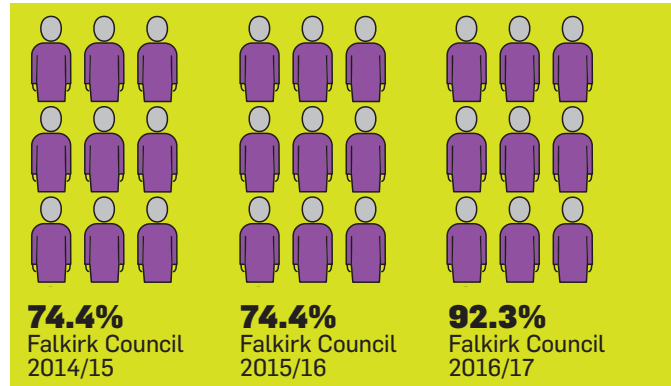
Falkirk Council
2016/17

Neighbourhood & Community

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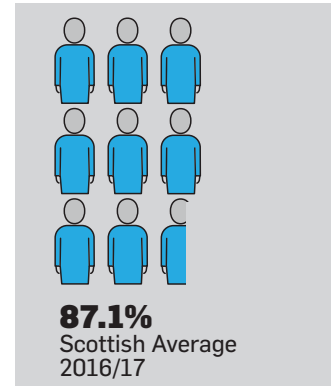
Indicator 17 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of their neighbourhood

The large scale tenants satisfaction survey completed in 2016/17 asked tenants how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with Falkirk Councils management of the neighbourhood they live in. 92.3% of tenants said they were very or fairly satisfied with 5.6% very or fairly dissatisfied. The reported results showed an improvement of 17.9% on the 74.4% satisfaction levels



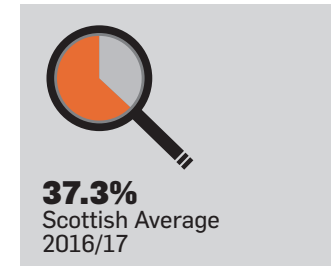
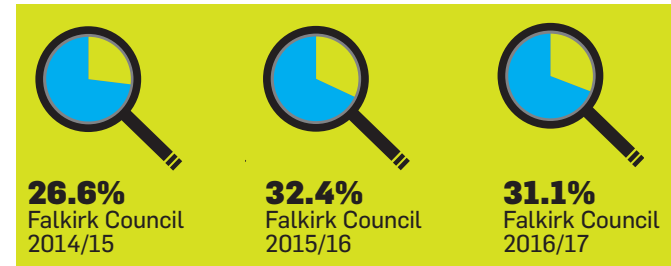
reported previously. The customer led inspection provided recommendations which have been taken forward and have been influential in improving the Councils

performance. Local consultations also help to shape the services provided and the way we manage the neighbourhood in which you live.



Indicator 18 Percentage of tenancy offers refused

We monitor the number of offers of housing that have been refused through our Choice Based Letting System. In 2016/17 this has decreased by 1.3%. In 2016/17 refusals were also below the national average. There are still improvements to be made to ensure that applicants are only bidding for the properties that they want.

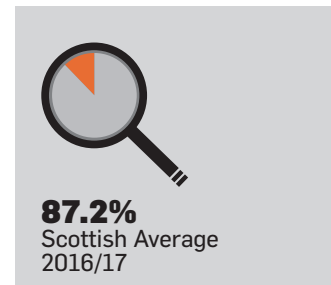


Indicator 19 Percentage of antisocial behaviour cases resolved within our locally agreed targets

Falkirk Council continues to work towards improvements in tackling and resolving anti social behaviour whilst balancing it carefully with the needs of all those impacted by ASB. Through a system of strong processes and communication with relevant partners we have increased our percentage of resolved



cases year on year. We strive to maintain this momentum, without losing the focus of the customer, and figures for 2017/18 are currently above target with a positive outcome forecast.

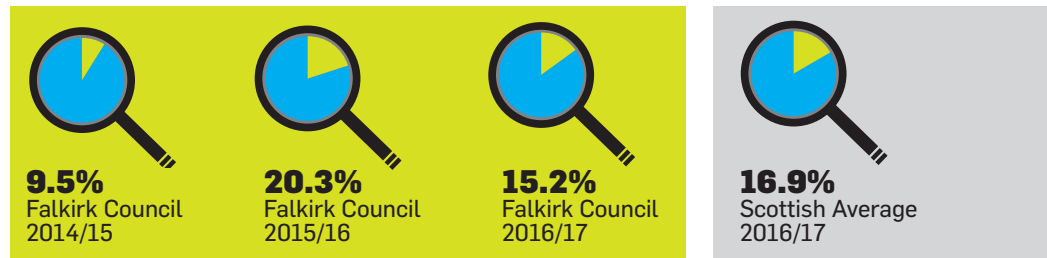


Neighbourhood & Community

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Indicator 24 Percentage of court actions initiated which resulted in eviction

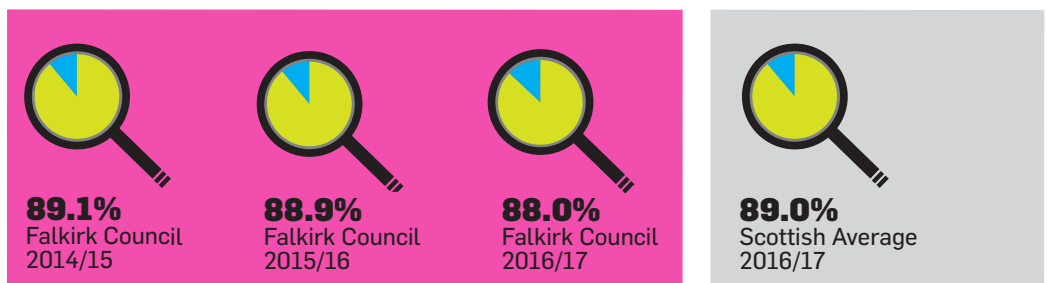
The proportion of court actions which resulted in eviction is close to the Scottish average. In 2016/17 we evicted 62 tenants.



Access to Housing & Support

Indicator 20 Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than 12 months

Each year we look at the number of tenancies that have started in the previous year to find out if the tenants are still in their homes after 12 months. We have noticed a slight decrease in the numbers staying in their accommodation from the previous year and are reporting lower tenancy sustainment rates than the national average. When looking

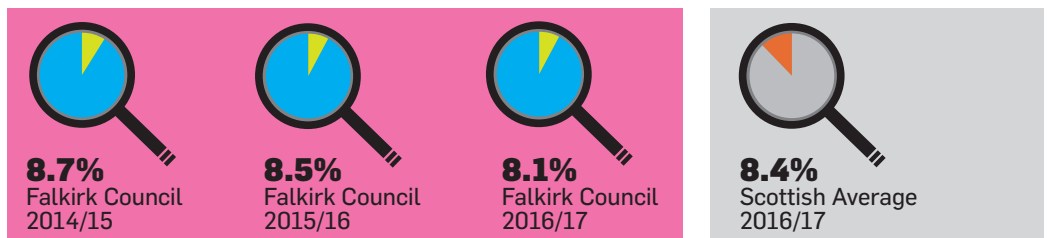


at the reasons why applicants have not stayed in their tenancies the majority ended their tenancies through choice (81%). To minimise tenancies failing, we offer a number of housing support services

which can help tenants who are struggling with their rent and household bills or who are struggling to maintain their tenancies for a variety of reasons.

Indicator 21 Percentage of lettable houses that became vacant

There has been a drop in the number of properties that we have available to let. It is important that there is turnover of housing stock to support this. We offer incentives to encourage stock turnover, for example: tenant



incentive scheme which supports tenants who wish to move to a smaller property.

Indicator 25 Average length of time spent in temporary or emergency accommodation (in days)

The number of days homeless applicants have spent in temporary accommodation has risen by 13 days from the previous year. This is due to a number of factors. We have a lower turnover of properties,



so they are taking longer to move out of temporary accommodation into permanent accommodation. We have rehoused a number of households who have been in temporary accommodation

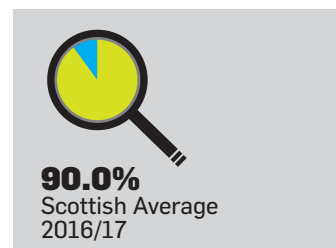
for a significant period of time as suitable housing has not been available. This has increased the average time in temporary accommodation. We will continue to ensure that homeless households spend

as little time as possible in temporary accommodation and utilise all the support services available to ensure that they are assisted to do so.

Access to Housing & Support

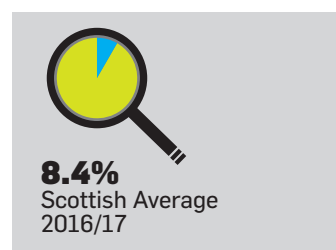
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Indicator 26 Percentage of households requiring temporary or emergency accommodation who receive an offer of that type of accommodation



All applicants who present as homeless to Falkirk Council and require accommodation are offered accommodation.

Indicator 27 Percentage of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused



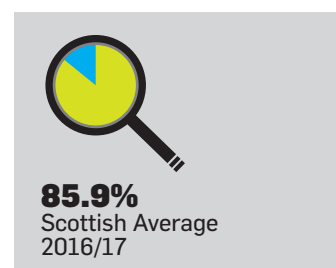
The number of homeless applicants who have refused an offer of temporary accommodation has risen by 4% from last year however it matches the national average of 8.4%. Offers are normally rejected because

accommodation is not in an area that the household would prefer or the style of property is not what they want. Unfortunately temporary

accommodation is limited and therefore we are not always able to offer a choice of area or property type. However we always try to accommodate

applicants preferences, where possible.

Indicator 28 Of those households homeless in the last 12 months, the percentage satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation



Our performance has reduced from the previous year. This is mainly due to a change in our procedures in the way that we collect this information. We

feel that this has led to more positive and meaningful information which can help

us improve our temporary accommodation services, going forward.

Indicator 35 Average time to re-let properties



There has been a significant improvement in our average re-let time during 2016/17. This has reduced to 33.4 days in 2016/17.

During 2015/16 a higher than normal average resulted from a concerted effort to tackle 'Low Demand' properties and improve our letting standard. As anticipated, these changes have had a positive impact on average re-let times and customer experience. The

Council is now performing close to the all-landlord average of 31.5 days. The recent changes in our letting standard has allowed us to complete all repairs during the void stage of the re-let process, ensuring that our tenants are settled with a minimum amount of disruption.

Getting Good Value for Rents & Service Charges

Indicator 30 Rent we collected as a percentage of the total rent due

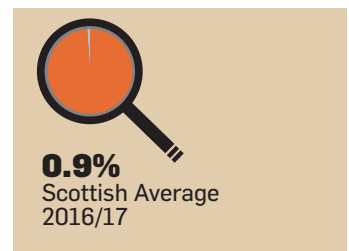
We continue to collect over 99% of rent levied and in 2016/17 this meant that we collected £51.25m out of £51.7m rent billed. We are below the Scottish Average in this area but have carried out a review to improve this and also prepare for the



wider roll-out of Universal Credit in Falkirk Council area from March 2018.

Indicator 34 Percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty during the last year

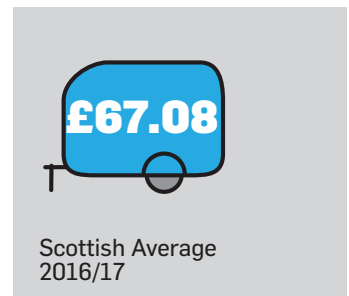
For the current reporting year (2016/17) the Council's performance was reported at 0.9%, which is 0.1% ahead of our target set at 1.0%. The council is performing at the same level as the all-lordlord average.



Other Customers(Gypsy Travellers)

Indicator 36 Average weekly rent per pitch

Our travelling persons site rents have increased in line with our mainstream tenancies at 3.6%. Each year we consult with the residents on our site about any rent charges .



Indicator 37 Percentage of gypsies/travellers satisfied with the landlord's management of the site

There have been improvements and policy changes to our travellers site in the last year which has resulted in some residents being dissatisfied with the service. Whilst completing upgrades to the site there has been some disruption and this



has impacted on the overall condition of the site whilst these works were undertaken. We anticipate that now all of the works are completed

residents will see the improvements to their living conditions and the wider site and this will be reflected in next year's satisfaction survey.

How can you get involved?

Falkirk Council's Inspector Tenant is here to help you tell us how Housing Services could improve its performance.

With your involvement, you will be able to tell us what you think about the services we provide, make suggestions on how we could do better, and check out how we are performing.

There are many ways that you can get involved and help Housing Services to keep you informed. These include:

- Tenants' & Residents' Forum
 - Open Days
 - Questionnaires & Surveys
 - Exhibitions
 - Comment Cards
 - Consultation Register
 - Customer Scrutiny Panel
 - Project Award Panel
 - Registered Tenants' & Residents' Organisations
 - Editorial Panel
 - Estate Walkabouts
 - Tenant Magazine
- and much more...

Tenant Feedback Contact Details

Falkirk Council Community Engagement Team

The Forum
Callendar Business Park
Falkirk
FK1 1XR

Tel: 01324 590796 or 01324 590858

Email: inspector.tenant@falkirk.gov.uk

Web: www.falkirk.gov.uk/inspectortenant

Scottish Housing Regulator

Highlander House
58 Waterloo Street
Glasgow
G2 7DA

Tel: 0141 242 5642

Email: shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk

You can compare how Falkirk Council's performance compares with other social landlords across Scotland by visiting the Scottish Housing Regulator's website at:
<http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/contact-us>

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, LARGE PRINT or audio tape, please contact one of our Neighbourhood Offices/One Stop Shops.



Falkirk Council

www.falkirk.gov.uk