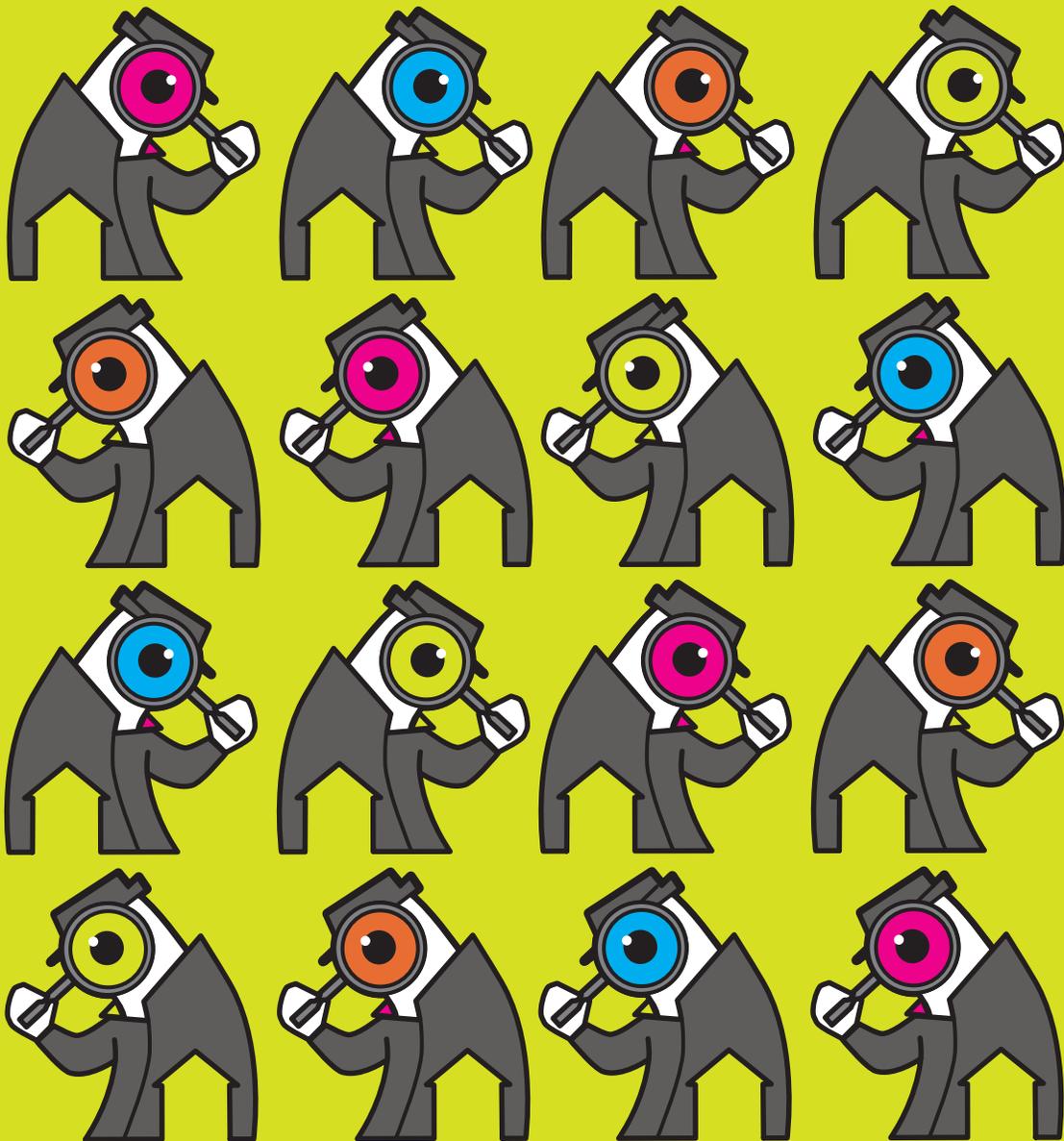


# Landlord Report to Tenants 2018

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
<b>1 APT</b>	0	0	0	0	30	30	29	£46.32	£67.44
<b>2 APT</b>	602	362	320	396	987	2,667	2,618	£53.04	£73.33
<b>3 APT</b>	2,801	616	1,618	2,727	918	8,680	8,588	£62.95	£74.94
<b>4 APT</b>	3,327	0	468	432	212	4,439	4,427	£71.10	£81.37
<b>5+ APT</b>	432	0	3	41	17	493	493	£81.53	£90.39
<b>Total</b>	7,162	978	2,409	3,596	2,164	16,309	16,155	£64.11	£76.23

### Indicator C21

#### Percentage rent increase in 2014/15



Although our percentage rent increase is above the overall landlord average, our rent levels continue to be amongst the lowest nationally. We changed our rent consultation for 2018/19, and offered tenants a choice of potential rent increases based on potential expenditure to our homes.

## Welcome to Falkirk Council's fifth 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 our customers can access the 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 [www.scottishhousingregulator.co.uk](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](mailto:inspector.tenant@falkirk.gov.uk)

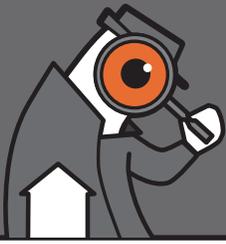
Kenny Gillespie  
Head of Housing Services

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

**Graphics are indicative and not to scale.**

## Content

Customer-Landlord Relationship	2
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## Customer - Landlord Relationship

### Indicator 1

Percentage of tenants satisfied with our overall landlord service

#### Falkirk Council



**84.6%** 2017/18



**84.6%** 2016/17



**77.4%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average



**90.5%** 2017/18

Our performance has remained the same since last year, as our last large-scale tenants satisfaction survey was completed in November/December 2016. We surveyed 1,001 tenants at this time. This will be carried out again at the end of 2018, and we aim to see an improvement in this performance.

We continue to listen to what our tenants tell us about the service we provide, and have made improvements to how we communicate about repairs and how customers can submit complaints and enquiries to us. We are also re-structuring our Housing Service, to provide a better service to tenants at all points of contact.

### Indicator 3

Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about services and decisions

#### Falkirk Council



**90.5%** 2017/18



**90.5%** 2016/17



**72.7%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average



**91.7%** 2017/18

Our performance has remained the same since last year, as our last large-scale tenants satisfaction survey was completed in November/December 2016. We surveyed 1,001 tenants at this time. This will be carried out again at the end of 2018, and we aim to see an improvement in this performance.

We continue to host our annual Charter Chat events, and to provide information to tenants about our performance through our website, housing magazine 'Tenant Talk' and in our Annual Report to Tenants. We also updated our rent consultation process, which this year gave tenants four choices of rent increases, with more detail provided about how we spend their rent.

### Indicator 6

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities to participate

#### Falkirk Council



**86.9%** 2017/18



**86.9%** 2016/17



**75.6%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average

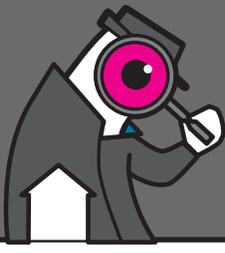


**85.9%** 2017/18

Our performance has remained the same since last year, as our last large-scale tenants satisfaction survey was completed in November/December 2016. We surveyed 1,001 tenants at this time. This will be carried out again at the end of 2018, and we aim to see an improvement in this performance.

Our Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy for the period 2016-19 includes an action plan to help tenants track progress on satisfaction with the service. The next Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy is currently being developed, to be launched in 2019.

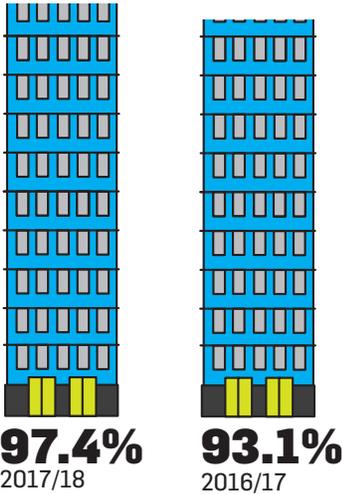
Recent tenant surveys have found most tenants are happy with communication and engagement as options for involvement. We are actively going through our register of those who have said they would like to participate, to try and increase the number of tenants getting involved.



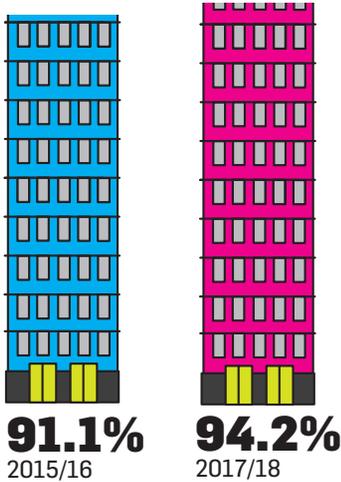
# Housing Quality & Maintenance

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

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



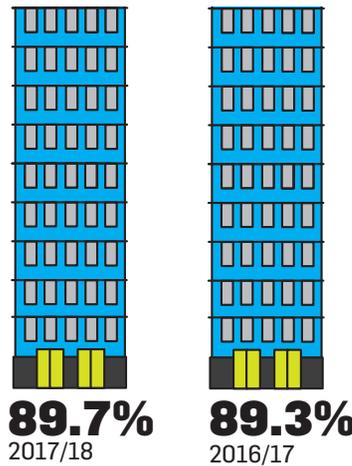
We have increased the number of homes meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) from 93.1% in 2016/17 to 97.4% in 2017/18, exceeding the Scottish average figure for 2017/18.

A three year investment programme is in place to ensure our stock continues to be maintained to the SHQS by December 2020.

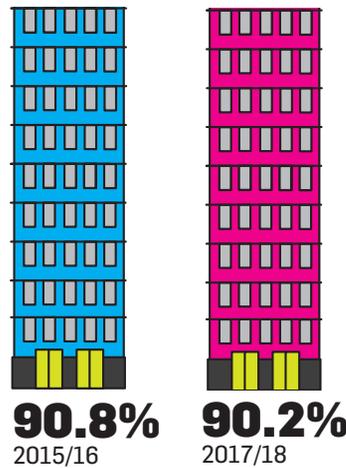
We continue to review the 2.6% of properties which are not compliant, and where possible, work will be carried out when a property is void to ensure it meets the SHQS. However, half of the properties which are not compliant are due to non-participation by private owners.

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

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



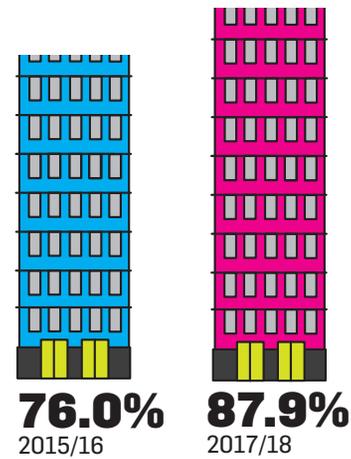
We continue to monitor the reasons for dissatisfaction with their new home reported to us. A pilot has been running over the last year in the Denny and Stenhousemuir areas, where an officer provides a dedicated point of contact to the new tenant regarding the repairs being done to homes. As this pilot has shown higher levels of satisfaction, the new Housing Services structure will introduce three officers to carry out this work across the whole Council area. This will provide consistency and hopefully increase satisfaction rates further.

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

**Falkirk Council**

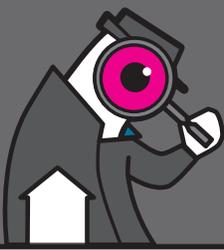


**Scottish Average**



Our performance has remained the same since last year, as our last large-scale tenants satisfaction survey was completed in November/December 2016. This will be carried out again at the end of 2018, and we aim to see an improvement in this figure.

We are continuing to carry out significant improvements to our existing homes through our investment programme. Over the next three years, £51.5m of investment is planned, including improvements such as roofing and roughcasting, insulation measures, kitchen and bathroom replacements, electrical safety checks and installation of carbon monoxide monitors. It is hoped these improvements will help increase tenants satisfaction with their homes.



## Housing Quality & Maintenance (Continued)

### Indicator 11

#### Average time to complete emergency repairs (in hours)

The length of time taken to complete emergency repairs increased last year, from 4.5 hours in 2016/17 to 5 hours in 2017/18. We still met our internal target of 5 hours. This was affected in part by the shutdown in Council services in the severe weather of February and March 2018, which affected timescales.

Along with our Workflow Team, we have introduced an Emergency Response Team to prioritise emergency repairs. We will be working to ensure that repairs are categorised correctly through Repair Finder, as we currently have a high number of emergency repairs. We have also developed an action plan to monitor how repairs reported to us are categorised and completed.

### Indicator 12

#### Average time to complete non-emergency repairs (in working days)

We improved our length of time to complete non-emergency repairs, from 8.9 days in 2016/17 to 8 days in 2017/18. This met our internal target of 8 days.

The introduction of the Workflow Team in the East and Central areas has assisted in reducing times to complete non-emergency repairs. We are working on expanding the Workflow Team to cover the whole Council area during the year 2018/19, to build on their existing success.

We are also looking at how we can bring further improvements to this indicator, such as expanding mobile working technology to more of our repairs staff.

In addition, work being carried out to improve recording of emergency repairs will also help improve this indicator. By ensuring repairs are properly recorded and completed, it will increase staff capacity to deal with non-emergency repairs.

**Falkirk Council**

**5.0 Hrs**

2017/18

**4.5 Hrs**

2016/17

**5.0 Hrs**

2015/16

**Scottish Average**

**4.0 Hrs**

2017/18

**Falkirk Council**

**8.0 DAYS**

2017/18

**8.9 DAYS**

2016/17

**11.3 DAYS**

2015/16

**Scottish Average**

**6.4 DAYS**

2017/18

### Indicator 16

#### Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service

**Falkirk Council**



**93.8%** 2017/18



**91.3%** 2016/17



**93.4%** 2015/16

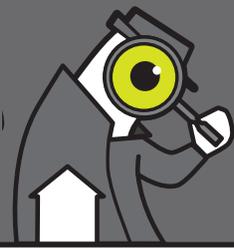
**Scottish Average**



**92.1%** 2017/18

Our performance has increased from 91.3% in 2016/17, to 93.8% in 2017/18. This has taken us above the Scottish average for this figure.

Last year, we changed how we collect repairs satisfaction information from our tenants. We now invite tenants to complete a survey online or telephone us, following completion of their repair. Our Workflow Team make telephone calls to customers once their repair has been completed, to find out their opinions, which is showing high levels of satisfaction. We also make telephone calls to tenants outwith the Workflow Team's areas. We are seeing a higher level of satisfaction using these new methods. The personal approach of these telephone calls gives us a better level of communication with our tenants.



## Neighbourhood & Community

The management of complaints for Housing Services is now overseen by a centralised Information Team. They ensure that managers are kept aware of cases nearing their target date, to these are answered within timescales wherever possible. We endeavour to respond to all complaints; however, there will be a small minority where we cannot answer.

We sometimes cannot answer complaints within the SPSO's timescales, and if this is the case, an extension will be applied to the case. These extensions are not reflected in these figures. The Council's Annual Complaints Report gives more information on this, and it is available [here](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/complaints)

**Indicator 4a:**  
First stage complaints on equalities issues responded to in full by the landlord

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



**Indicator 4b:**  
First stage complaints on other issues responded to in full by the landlord

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



**Indicator 4c:**  
Second stage complaints on equalities issues responded to in full by the landlord

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



**Indicator 4d:**  
Second stage complaints on other issues responded to in full by the landlord

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**

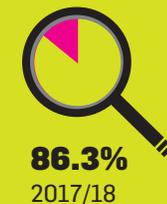


**Indicator 5a:**  
First stage complaints that were answered within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman recommended timescale (5 days)

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



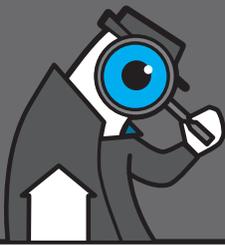
**Indicator 5b:**  
Second stage complaints that were answered within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman recommended timescale (20 days)

**Falkirk Council**



**Scottish Average**



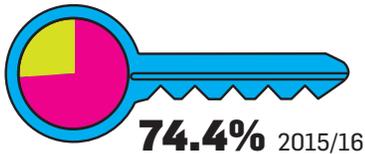
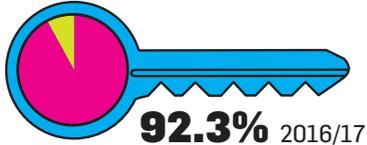
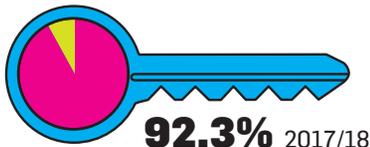


## Neighbourhood & Community (Continued)

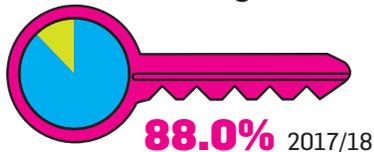
### Indicator 17

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of their neighbourhood

#### Falkirk Council



#### Scottish Average



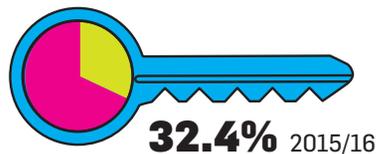
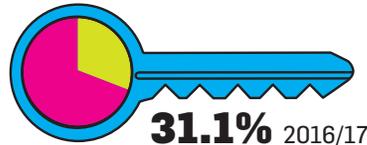
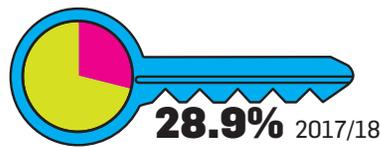
Our performance has remained the same since last year, as our last large-scale tenants satisfaction survey was completed in November/December 2016. This will be carried out again at the end of 2018, and we aim to see an improvement in this figure.

We have worked with internal and external partners, and our Customer Led Inspectors, to develop programmes to tackle issues important to tenants. This includes the issue of waste management in our communities. We continue to work with other Council services to identify and improve areas of both soft and hard landscaping in our housing estates.

### Indicator 18

Percentage of tenancy offers refused

#### Falkirk Council



#### Scottish Average



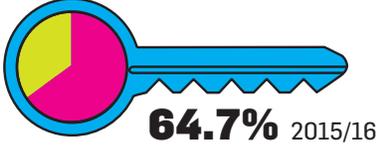
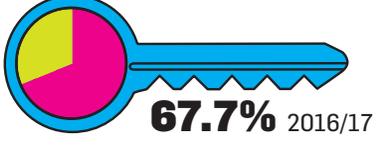
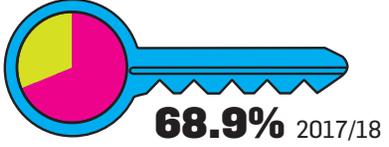
The percentage of tenancy offers refused has decreased by 3.5% since 2015/16, to 28.9% in 2017/18. We are significantly below the Scottish average, which is partly due to our Choice Based Lettings System, which allows customers the opportunity to bid for houses they wish to be considered for.

We continue to monitor the number of properties being refused and the reasons for this. Taking account of recommendations made by our Customer Scrutiny Panel, we intend to make improvements to the recording of these reasons, to better understand why customers are refusing properties.

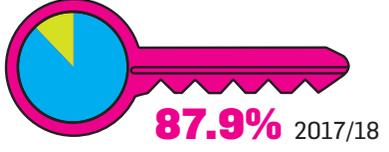
### Indicator 19

Percentage of antisocial behaviour cases resolved within our locally agreed targets

#### Falkirk Council



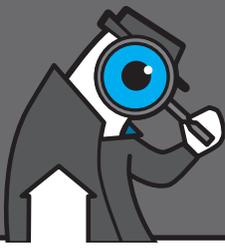
#### Scottish Average



Our performance in resolving antisocial behaviour cases continues to increase steadily. While we are below the national average, this indicator is based on locally agreed targets, so we cannot directly compare with others.

A number of improvement actions have been taken to improve management of antisocial behaviour cases. These include improving performance reporting, reviewing operational practices in our local housing offices, and auditing cases held on our housing management system to ensure they have been recorded correctly.

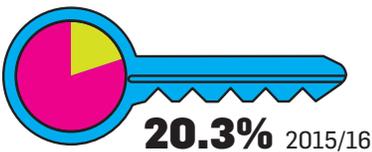
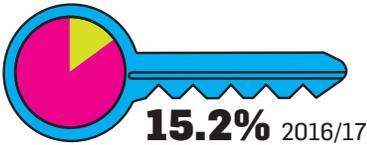
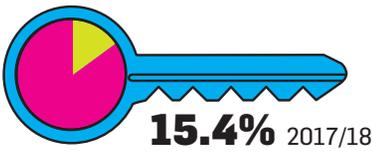
Under our new Housing Services structure, the management of all antisocial behaviour cases will be moving to our specialist Conflict Resolution Service. The numbers of cases completed on target are higher in our existing Conflict Resolution Service, and therefore it is intended this high level of performance would continue in the centralised service.



## Access to Housing & Support

### Indicator 24 Percentage of court actions initiated which resulted in eviction

#### Falkirk Council



#### Scottish Average



The proportion of court actions which resulted in evictions stayed relatively similar to last year, rising by only 0.2%. However, we have initiated more court actions in 2017/18, with 604 compared to 409 in 2016/17. The number of evictions has therefore increased accordingly, with 93 tenants evicted in 2017/18, compared to 62 in 2016/17.

We have improved processes to ensure that recovery actions are followed when required. While there has been an increase in court actions, we are satisfied that in each case appropriate action and engagement has been taken to try to prevent the need for this action.

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

#### Falkirk Council

**88.7%** 2017/18

**88.0%** 2016/17

**89.0%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average

**88.7%** 2017/18

The number of new tenancies sustained for more than twelve months has increased slightly, from 88.0% in 2016/17 to 88.7% in 2017/18.

The number of tenancies which end within twelve months included both tenancies that have ended for positive or negative reasons. Approximately 13% of our tenancies end for negative reasons, and we continue to ensure that we try to support those who are struggling to maintain their tenancies. We are developing a project plan through Council of the Future to improve sustainment of tenancies, and will be focussing on the customer journey and how we can make service improvements based on this.

### Indicator 21 Percentage of lettable houses that became vacant in the last year

#### Falkirk Council

**8.0%** 2017/18

**8.1%** 2016/17

**8.5%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average

**8.6%** 2017/18

The percentage of properties we have available to let has fallen slightly from last year. We continue to look at ways to maintain our stock turnover, including building new homes and buying back properties to increase our stock size. We also offer a tenant incentive scheme for tenants who wish to move to a smaller property.

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

#### Falkirk Council

**98.1**  
**DAYS**

2017/18

**87.3**  
**DAYS**

2016/17

**74.5**  
**DAYS**

2015/16

#### Scottish Average

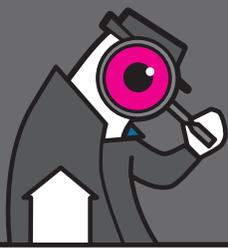
**103.2**  
**DAYS**

2017/18

There has been an increase in the time households spend in temporary accommodation in 2017/18, compared to previous years.

The time that people spend in temporary accommodation is related to the needs of their household, and the properties we have available to re-house them. In 2017/18, we re-housed a number of households with specific needs (such as large households or those needing specialist housing), who have been housed in temporary accommodation for a longer period of time to allow these needs to be met.

Despite the pressures we face on temporary accommodation, we continue to avoid the use of unsuitable accommodation such as bed and breakfasts.



## Access to Housing & Support (Continued)

### 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, who are in need of accommodation, receive an offer of accommodation from us.

#### Falkirk Council



**100%** 2017/18



**100%** 2016/17



**100%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average



**90.8%** 2017/18

### Indicator 27

**Percentage of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused**

The percentage of offers of temporary accommodation which are refused has reduced from 8.4% in 2016/17, and is now significantly under the national average.

We try to offer accommodation that meets the needs of the household. There are less people rejecting offers of temporary accommodation as a result of this, which has improved our performance from last year. We are also looking to improve the recording of reasons for those who do refuse accommodation, so we can improve this further in future.

#### Falkirk Council



**6.0%** 2017/18



**8.4%** 2016/17



**4.4%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average



**9.0%** 2017/18

### Indicator 28

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

The percentage of those satisfied with temporary accommodation has fallen slightly from last year. We regularly analyse this information, to ensure we are making improvements to our customers experience in temporary accommodation. We have introduced a new standard for our temporary accommodation, and will be implementing initiatives in the next year to increase levels of satisfaction.



**86.3%** 2017/18



**86.5%** 2016/17



**100%** 2015/16

#### Scottish Average



**87.9%** 2017/18

### Indicator 35

**Average time to re-let properties**

We have continued to make improvements each year to the timescales in which we re-let properties. To do this, we have improved our letting of low demand properties, and have introduced a new void standard, where required repairs are carried out before the property is let.

We continue to consider further improvements, such as including voids in our mobile working technology, and also options for advertising properties quicker. In addition, the new Housing Services structure will introduce three

**31.8 DAYS**

Falkirk Council  
2017/18

**50.2 DAYS**

Falkirk Council  
2015/16

**33.4 DAYS**

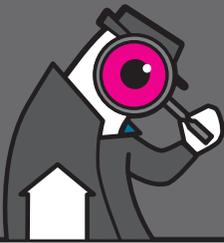
Falkirk Council  
2016/17

**30.7 DAYS**

Scottish  
Average  
2017/18

officers to provide a single point of contact to tenants to liaise with while repairs are being carried out to void properties they have been offered.

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel made recommendations to the service, and an action plan has been developed to implement these.

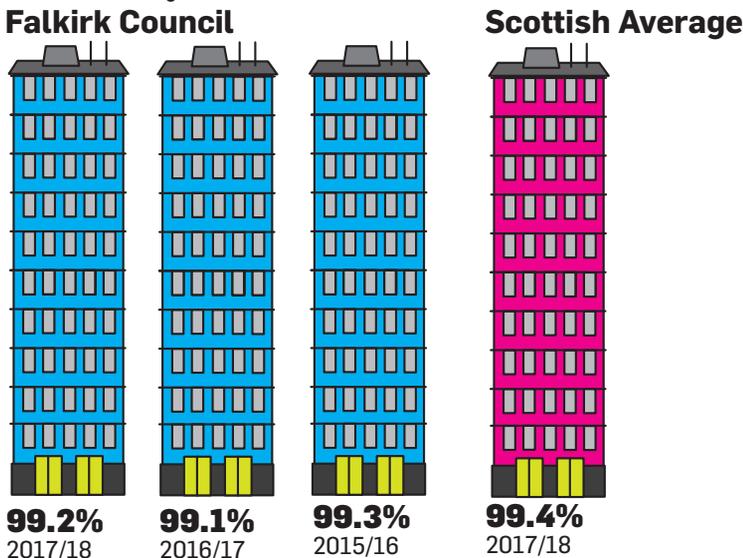


## Getting Good Value for Rents & Service Charges

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

The percentage of rent collected, as a percentage of all rent due, rose slightly from 2016/17. This is a positive improvement, given that Universal Credit moved from Live Service to Full Service across the Falkirk Council area. This has increased the number of tenants in receipt of this benefit. There have been well documented negative effects of Universal Credit on collection of rent and arrears levels across the country.

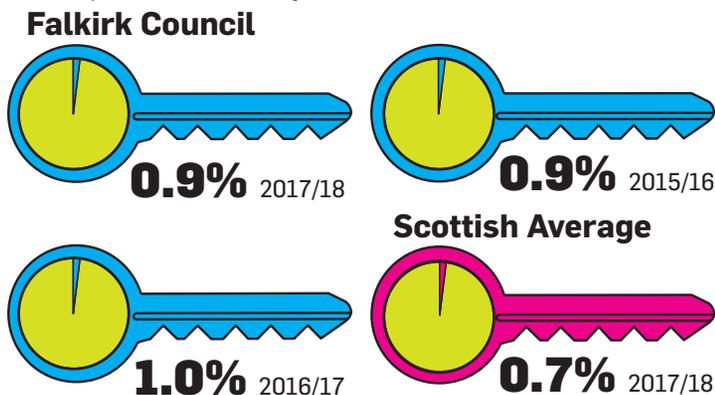
We have an Arrears Improvement Group in place, to work towards increasing our rent collection figures. The improvement actions carried out by them include improving written communication, implementing a new Corporate Debt Policy, and transferring recovery of rent arrears to frontline Housing staff.



### Indicator 34 Percentage of rent due that was lost through properties being empty

Our performance in this indicator remains steady from last year; however, we now perform slightly below the Scottish average in this indicator.

To make future improvements, we are now tracking rent loss through properties being empty at an area office level, so we can identify specific areas where we may be under-performing. We also continue to look at low demand properties, which take longer to let, to identify how we can make improvements in letting times for these.



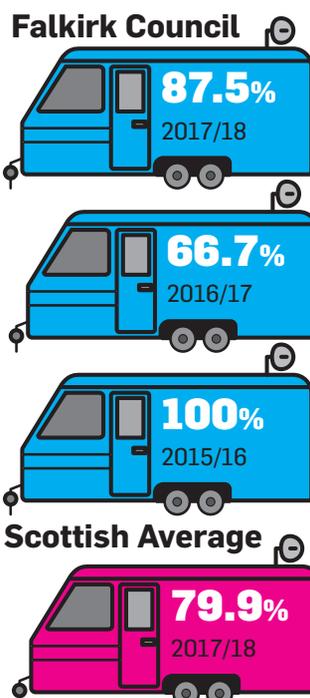
## Other Customers (Gypsies/Travellers)

### 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 their rent charges.

### Indicator 37 Percentage of Gypsies/Travellers satisfied with our management of the Travelling Persons' site



Satisfaction with the management of the site has increased significantly from last year, and is ahead of the Scottish average in this figure. We have undertaken work at the travellers site to meet standards specified by Scottish Government, which were required of us by June 2018. These were completed by October 2017, and we received praise from Scottish Government ministers for achieving this. They also stated our site was one of good practice. We will continue to work with site residents to improve and maintain the site.

## 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
- 'Make A Difference' Project Award Scheme
- 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

Email: [inspector.tenant@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:inspector.tenant@falkirk.gov.uk)

Web: [www.falkirk.gov.uk/inspectortenant](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/inspectortenant)

### **Scottish Housing Regulator**

Buchanan House  
58 Port Dundas Road  
Glasgow  
G4 0HF

Tel: 0141 242 5642

Email: [shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:shr@scottishhousingregulator.gsi.gov.uk)

You can compare Falkirk Council's performance with other social landlords across Scotland by visiting the Scottish Housing Regulator's website at:  
[www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk)

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/housing](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/housing)