

CUSTOMER
APPROVED

Landlord Report to Tenants **2019**



Contextual 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	Number of Lettable Units	Average Weekly Rent	Scottish Average
1 APT	0	0	0	0	28	28	26	£48.25	£70.22
2 APT	603	362	317	406	981	2,669	2,620	£54.99	£76.10
3 APT	2,825	615	1,630	2,765	916	8,751	8,665	£65.37	£77.70
4 APT	3,350	0	468	432	212	4,462	4,440	£73.73	£84.44
5+ APT	433	0	3	41	17	494	493	£84.44	£93.49
Total	7,211	977	2,418	3,644	2,154	16,404	16,244	£66.53	£79.08

Indicator C21

Percentage rent increase for next year

Falkirk Council

3.0%
2019/20

3.6% 2018/19
3.6% 2017/18

Scottish Average

2.97%
2019/20

Our rent levels continue to be among the lowest nationally. When we consult on rent increases, we offer tenants a choice of potential rent increases, based on what we plan to spend this money on.

Welcome to Falkirk Council's Landlord Report.

This report is to update you on how your Housing Service performed in 2018/19, in our Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator. It has been designed with our tenants and residents groups to show our performance in a clear and informative way.

Over the last year, there has been significant change in Housing Services which has been driven by feedback from our tenants and service users. There have been changes made to the staff structure, providing more frontline staff. You should now be aware of dedicated Housing Officers working in smaller areas. This allows you to contact them directly with any queries or concerns you may have. There have also been changes in how we manage antisocial behaviour which is now handled by our specialist Conflict Resolution Service to provide a more streamlined and direct approach to these cases.

Our successes over the past year include:

- Achieving Gold accreditation from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)
- Success in bringing empty homes in the area back into use (400 since 2013)
- Development of our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, to improve homelessness outcomes
- Plans approved to invest £156m over the next five years in upgrading homes
- Plans submitted to spend £124m to increase the number of affordable homes by around 1,000 over the next 5 years
- A national TPAS award for our Tamfourhill Tenants and Residents Group
- Recognition from Scottish Government on work undertaken to our Gypsy/Traveller site

To compare with other landlords across Scotland, view our Engagement Plan or find out more about the Charter, you can visit the Scottish Housing Regulator's website at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

We hope you find the information in the report useful and easy to understand. If you want to know more, or become more actively involved in helping us improve our service, you can email inspector.tenant@falkirk.gov.uk or call Alan Christie (Community Engagement Co-ordinator) on 01324 590796.

We would like to thank all tenants and service users, whether you are involved in our groups or not, for your feedback and participation. By telling us what you think, this allows us to shape our service as it continues to change and improve.

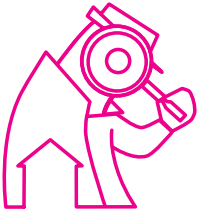
Kenny Gillespie
Head of Housing Services

We have set out our Charter performance in each of these indicators against the Scottish average for all landlords, as published by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Graphics are indicative and not to scale.

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Customer - Landlord Relationship

Indicator 1 Percentage of tenants satisfied with our overall landlord service

This indicator improved in our large scale tenants' satisfaction survey in December 2018. This was carried out using a face to face survey, with a representative sample of tenants.

In order to improve satisfaction with our overall service, we have listened to the reasons why tenants are dissatisfied.

Our tenants told us that we need to communicate better on issues such as complaints and progress with repairs. In response to this feedback we have introduced a Workflow Team that enables the service to update tenants in real time on progress with their repair. Customers can now submit complaints online, via the Council-wide MyFalkirk page, which allows them to track their complaint through a unique reference number.

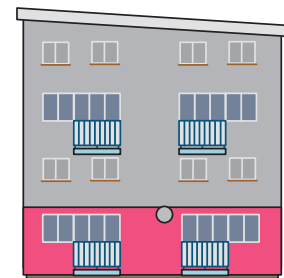
We will continue to listen to our tenants and make improvements based on what they tell us.

Falkirk Council
91.8% 2018/19



84.6% 2017/18
84.6% 2016/17

Scottish Average
90.1% 2018/19

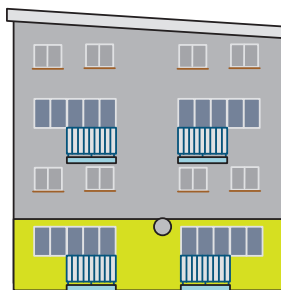


Indicator 3 Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about services and decisions

This indicator improved in our large scale tenants' satisfaction survey in December 2018. We have listened to what our tenants have told us about preferred methods of communication, and made changes to reflect this. Our magazine, Tenant Talk, has been revamped and we have increased the number of editions per year.

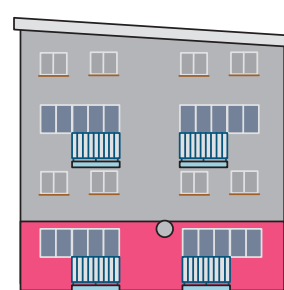
For those who wish to be involved, there are a number of tenants groups scrutinising our service, including the How Your Rent Money is Spent Group, Scrutiny Panel, Editorial Panel and Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP) Group. We also hold a Tenants' and Residents' Forum every three months, which is open to all to attend.

Falkirk Council
95.2% 2018/19



90.5% 2017/18
90.5% 2016/17

Scottish Average
91.6% 2018/19



Indicator 6 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities to participate

This indicator improved in our large scale tenants' satisfaction survey in December 2018.

We promote ways to get involved in the service from the beginning of tenancies, and have a number of active tenants groups working with the service.

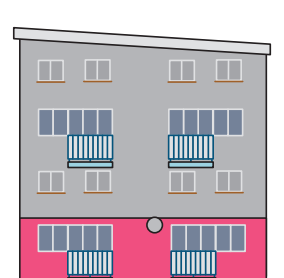
We were recently awarded Gold accreditation from Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), for our work with tenants and how we include them in the service.

Falkirk Council
92.9% 2018/19



86.9% 2017/18
86.9% 2016/17

Scottish Average
86.5% 2018/19





Housing Quality & Maintenance

Indicator 7

Percentage of our stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

We continue to work on a case by case basis to address properties which don't currently meet the SHQS, which is often due to refusal by tenants to have work carried out, or owners refusing work to shared areas. We continue to buy back properties which may change majority ownership in blocks, and also carry out required works in any properties where the tenancy has ended.

Falkirk Council

97.7% 2018/19

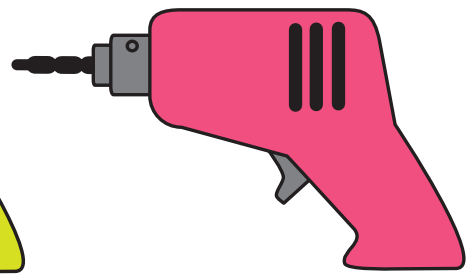


97.4% 2017/18

93.1% 2016/17

Scottish Average

94.1% 2018/19



Indicator 9

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

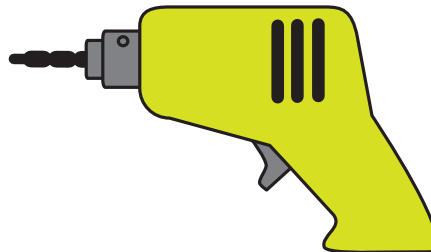
Our voids team have been looking at performance in this indicator in a more in-depth manner on a monthly basis, including regular discussion at team meetings, to identify where we can improve our service to our customers.

Percentage checks of post inspections of properties have also been increased.

The main reasons for dissatisfaction identified are cleanliness of the property, decoration and repairs still to be completed. We have introduced a new contract for cleaning void properties, to help address customer concerns with cleanliness.

Falkirk Council

89.3% 2018/19

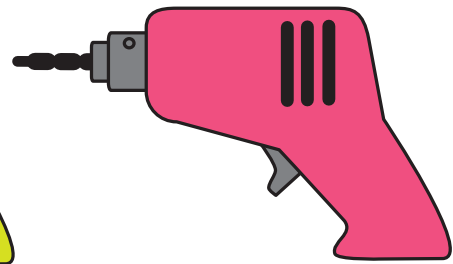


89.7% 2017/18

89.3% 2016/17

Scottish Average

90.8% 2018/19



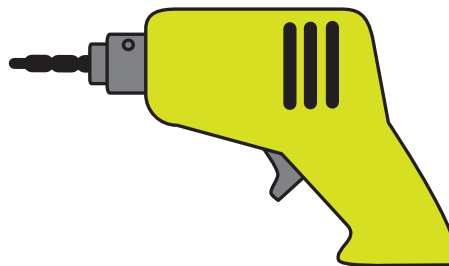
Indicator 10

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the quality of their home

This indicator improved in our large scale tenants' satisfaction survey in December 2018. We continue to invest in our tenants homes, with a capital programme investing £280million in upgrades and improvements over the next five years.

Falkirk Council

93.5% 2018/19

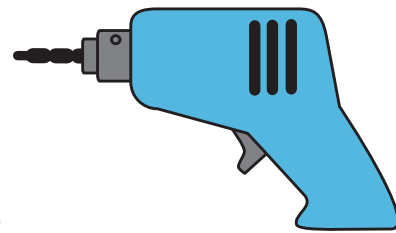


80.7% 2017/18

80.7% 2016/17

Scottish Average

88.1% 2018/19





Housing Quality & Maintenance (Continued)

Indicator 11

Average time to complete emergency repairs (in hours)

We have recently looked at issues with recording of repairs jobs, including classifying emergency work and completing work on our system. An action plan was developed to address these issues, which was fully completed. There will be regular monitoring and validation based on this plan, including ensuring that all emergency repair lines are raised and completed correctly.

Having technical staff as part of the Workflow Team, together with establishing a dedicated Emergency Response team, has helped contribute to improvements in performance.

Falkirk Council

3.95 Hrs

2018/19

4.98 Hrs

2017/18

4.46 Hrs

2016/17

Scottish Average

3.65 Hrs

2018/19

Indicator 12

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

The introduction of the Workflow Team has assisted in reducing the time taken to complete a non-emergency repair within the east and central areas. The Workflow Team expanded into the West area on 4 March 2019, and is now covering the whole Council area for reactive repairs.

Appointments for non-emergency repairs are still provided within 72 hours of the repair being reported. We are currently looking at new improvements to continue improving our performance, including further rollout of mobile working technology, and improving how we classify repairs when reported, to reduce the number of emergency repairs.

Falkirk Council

6.79 Days

2018/19

7.97 Days

2017/18

8.94 Days

2016/17

Scottish Average

6.56 Days

2018/19

Indicator 16

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service

We now collect satisfaction surveys online, with a request to complete this included in the receipt for every repair reported.

In addition, we are increasing the number of telephone calls being made by the Workflow team to tenants once their repair has been completed. This personal approach of telephone calls will also facilitate a better level of communication with the customer.

Where customers report dissatisfaction, or provide positive feedback, these are fed back to the repairs service to ensure that remedial action is taken. In the case of Workflow telephone calls, remedial action can be initiated following the telephone call, which again improves customers' service. We have been monitoring the number of surveys completed, and are looking at ways to increase the satisfaction surveys completed.

Falkirk Council

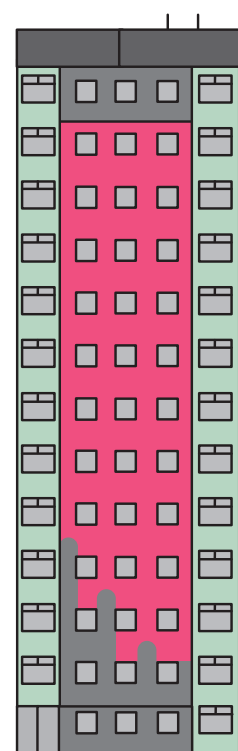
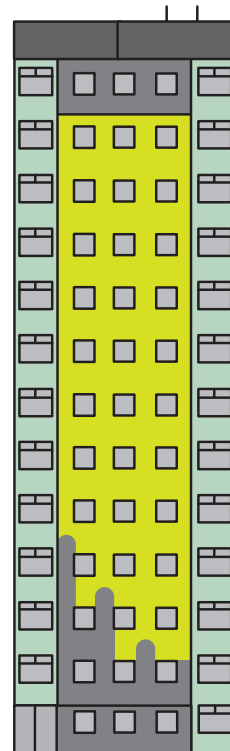
93.7%

2018/19

Scottish Average

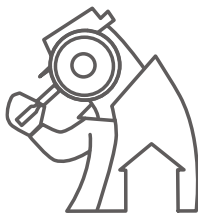
91.7%

2018/19



93.8% 2017/18

91.3% 2016/17



Neighbourhood & Community

There has been an increase in complaints received compared to 2017/18, which reflects the transparency we promote with complaints and encouraging customers to take up this option if they are dissatisfied. Even with these increases, we have improved our performance from last year in responding to complaints within timescales.

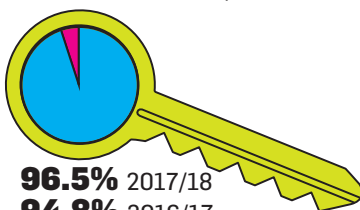
We have used feedback from complaints to inform forthcoming changes to the service, including centralising communal repairs affecting owners into a new Income and Customer Relations Team, to improve consistency in processes and how we handle these.

Indicator 4a:

First stage complaints responded to in full by the landlord

Falkirk Council

95.2% 2018/19

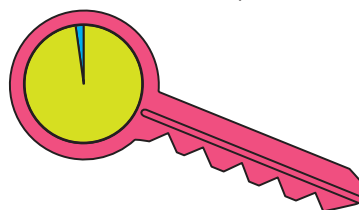


96.5% 2017/18

94.8% 2016/17

Scottish Average

98.4% 2018/19

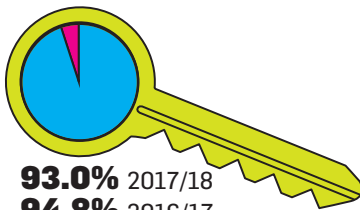


Indicator 4c:

Second stage complaints responded to in full by the landlord

Falkirk Council

95.6% 2018/19

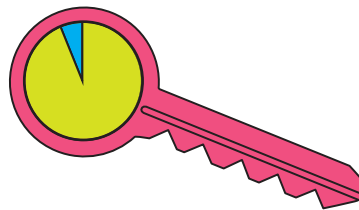


93.0% 2017/18

94.8% 2016/17

Scottish Average

94.2% 2018/19

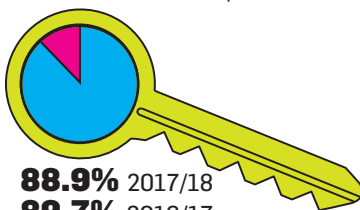


Indicator 5a:

First stage complaints that were answered within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman timescale (5 days)

Falkirk Council

88.4% 2018/19

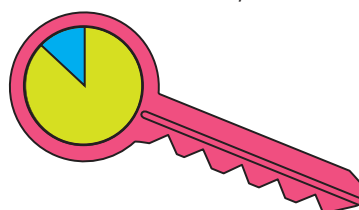


88.9% 2017/18

89.7% 2016/17

Scottish Average

86.9% 2018/19

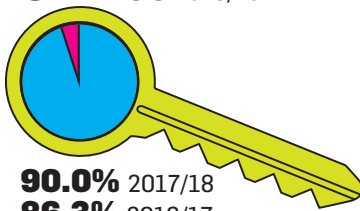


Indicator 5b:

Second stage complaints that were answered within the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman timescale (20 days)

Falkirk Council

94.7% 2018/19

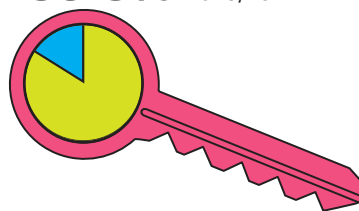


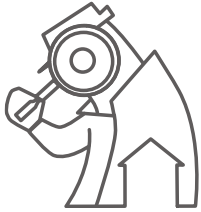
90.0% 2017/18

86.3% 2016/17

Scottish Average

83.8% 2018/19





Neighbourhood & Community (Continued)

Indicator 17

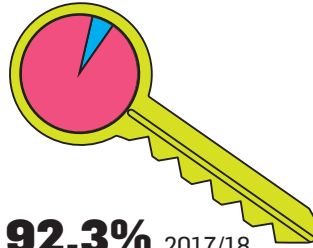
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of their neighbourhood

This indicator improved in our large scale tenants' satisfaction survey in December 2018.

Over the past three years, we have undertaken a large scale fencing and ground works contract across several locations in the whole Council area, to improve the overall appearance of our streets and estates. This has received positive feedback for the improvement made to these areas. Our Housing Operations staff are also now working in a more mobile and flexible manner, making them more visible and approachable in the community.

Falkirk Council

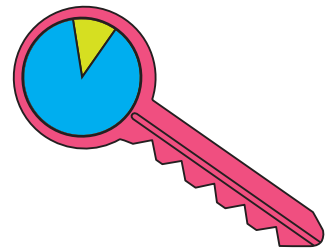
94.3% 2018/19



92.3% 2017/18
92.3% 2016/17

Scottish Average

87.8% 2018/19



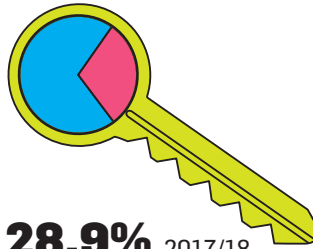
Indicator 18

Percentage of tenancy offers refused

There has been an increase in the numbers of offers refused. As part of the restructure of Housing Services, there are changes in Allocations and Housing Operations which should improve this indicator in future years.

Falkirk Council

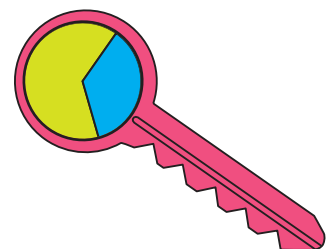
30.4% 2018/19



28.9% 2017/18
31.1% 2016/17

Scottish Average

36.3% 2018/19



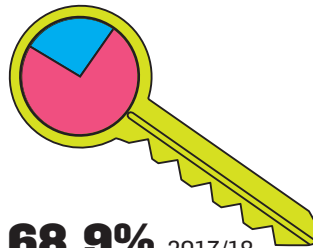
Indicator 19

Percentage of antisocial behaviour cases resolved within our locally agreed targets

There has been a significant increase in the number of cases reported over the past year, but we have also improved the number resolved in target over this time as well. During 2019, we will centralise the handling of antisocial behaviour cases to our specialist Conflict Resolution Service, as part of the restructure of Housing Services.

Falkirk Council

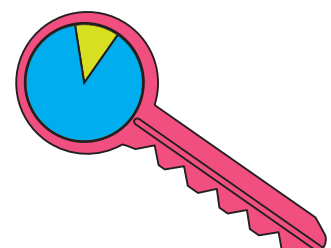
74.4% 2018/19



68.9% 2017/18
67.7% 2016/17

Scottish Average

87.9% 2018/19



Indicator 24

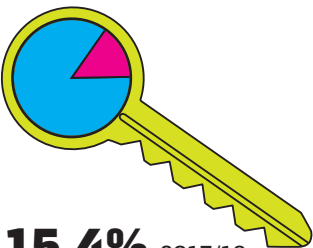
Percentage of court actions initiated which resulted in eviction

For evictions based on rent arrears, we have seen a reduction in the percentage of these compared to court actions initiated.

We do not compare this indicator against other authorities, as it would not be appropriate to set a target for evictions.

Falkirk Council

14.6% 2018/19



15.4% 2017/18
15.2% 2016/17

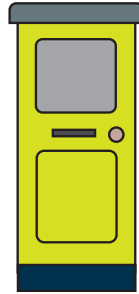


Access to Housing & Support

Indicator 20

Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than 12 months

We offer specialist services to households who are struggling to sustain their tenancy. These include housing support, debt and welfare benefits advice. Our Housing Officers will be ensuring that all tenants receive an annual visit to identify any issues with sustaining their tenancy. In addition, we have launched a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), which focusses on preventing homelessness. Through our RRTP, we have developed a specific homelessness prevention plan, which will further focus our activities on sustaining tenancies.



Falkirk Council
88.7% 2018/19
88.7% 2017/18
88.0% 2016/17



Scottish Average
88.8% 2018/19

Indicator 21

Percentage of lettable houses that became vacant in the last year

There has been an increase in our lettable stock from the previous year, which has helped to provide more applicants on our housing list with a wider choice of properties to bid for.

Falkirk Council

8.3% 2018/19 **8.0%** 2017/18 **8.1%** 2016/17



Scottish Average

8.6% 2018/19



Indicator 25

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

We regularly review our provision of temporary accommodation, to ensure we offer applicants a choice of suitable properties. We did not use bed and breakfast accommodation in 2018/19.

Falkirk Council
80.7 Days
2018/19

Scottish Average
102.1 Days
2018/19

98.1 Days
2017/18
87.3 Days
2016/17



Access to Housing & Support (Continued)

Indicator 26

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

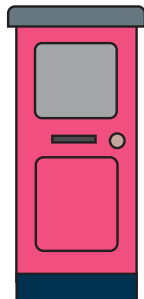
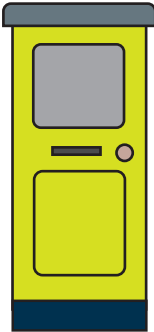
All applicants who present as homeless to Falkirk Council, who are in need of temporary accommodation, receive an offer of temporary accommodation from us.

Falkirk Council

100% 2018/19

Scottish Average

90.6% 2018/19



100% 2017/18

100% 2016/17

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

4.6%
2018/19

Scottish Average

10.0%
2018/19

6.0%
2017/18

8.4%
2016/17

Indicator 28

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

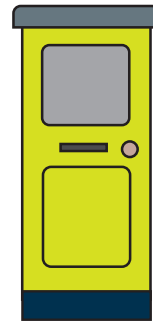
The percentage of those satisfied with temporary accommodation has increased from last year. We regularly analyse this information, to ensure we are making improvements to our customers experience in temporary accommodation. We have introduced a new standard for our temporary accommodation, and will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

Falkirk Council

96.1%
2018/19

Scottish Average

88.5%
2018/19



86.3% 2017/18

86.5% 2016/17

Indicator 35

Average time to re-let properties

We are currently reviewing the number of days that properties are void at each stage of the process, to ensure that any delays are minimised. We intend to improve this figure over the next year by making better use of mobile working technology to manage void repairs.

Falkirk Council

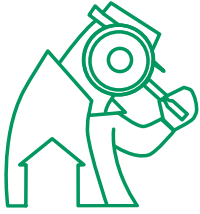
35.5 Days
2018/19

Scottish Average

31.9 Days
2018/19

31.8 Days
2017/18

33.4 Days
2016/17



Getting Good Value for Rents & Service Charges

Indicator 30

Rent we collected as a percentage of the total rent due

Our 2018/19 performance saw a downturn from last year. This is due to the volume of tenants who are now Universal Credit claimants (around 2,500) and the short-term impact this change had on rent arrears.

Falkirk Council

98.98%

2018/19

99.23% 2017/18

99.11% 2016/17



Scottish Average

99.1%

2018/19



Indicator 34

Percentage of rent due that was lost through properties being empty

We have unfortunately seen a decrease in performance in this indicator, but are currently undertaking a number of actions across the service to bring improvements to how we manage void properties. This aims to reduce the amount of rent that we cannot collect when properties are empty.

Falkirk Council

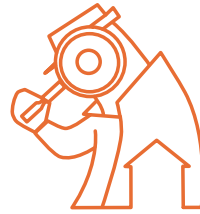
1.04% 2018/19

0.91% 2017/18

0.89% 2016/17

Scottish Average

0.88% 2018/19



Other Customers Gypsies/Travellers

Indicator 36

Average weekly rent per pitch

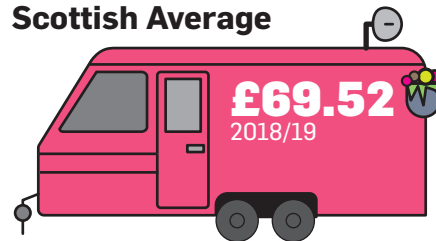
Falkirk Council



£76.59
2017/18

£73.93
2016/17

Scottish Average



Indicator 37

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

Following Scottish Government guidance on gypsy/traveller sites and the expected standard for these, we undertook work to bring the site up to this standard which was completed by October 2017. We received praise from Scottish Government for this, and it is reflected in the increase in satisfaction with management of the site for this year.

The Travelling Persons Officer has worked closely with our Community Engagement Officer, to help residents to form a tenants group, which became official on 4 March 2019. This group meets regularly to discuss the management of the site, and to plan future improvements to the site.

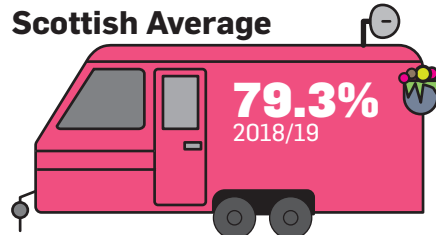
Falkirk Council



87.5%
2017/18

66.7%
2016/17

Scottish Average



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
- Comment Cards
- Consultation Register
- Customer Scrutiny Panel
- 'Make A Difference' Project Award Scheme
- Housing Asset Management Plan Group
- How Your Rent Money is Spent Group
- Registered Tenants' & Residents' Organisations
- Editorial Panel
- Estate Walkabouts

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

Web: 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

You can compare Falkirk Council's performance with other social landlords across Scotland, view our Engagement Plan, and learn more about the Charter by visiting the Scottish Housing Regulator's website at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, LARGE PRINT or audio tape, please contact one of our Advice & Support Hubs.



Falkirk Council

www.falkirk.gov.uk/housing