



## ***Housing Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel***

West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
LIVINGSTON  
EH54 6FF

22 March 2023

A hybrid meeting of the **Housing Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre** on **Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 2:00pm**.

For Chief Executive

### **BUSINESS**

#### **Public Session**

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Declarations of Interest - Members must declare any interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda items and the nature of their interests.
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business.
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of Housing Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on 26 January 2023 (herewith).
5. Performance Report - report by Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).
6. Property Turnover October to December 2022 - report by Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).
7. Update on Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS) 2022/23 and 2023/24 - report by Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).
8. Update to Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Scheme Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent - report by Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).

DATA LABEL: Public

9. Workplan (herewith).

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NOTE **For further information please contact Lorraine McGrorty on 01506 281609 or email [lorraine.mcgrorty@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.mcgrorty@westlothian.gov.uk)**



## **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (2021)**

**This form is a reminder and an aid. It is not a substitute for understanding the Code of Conduct and guidance.**

**Interests must be declared at the meeting, in public.**

**Look at every item of business and consider if there is a connection.**

**If you see a connection, decide if it amounts to an interest by applying the objective test.**

**The objective test is whether or not a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard your connection to a particular matter as being so significant that it would be considered as being likely to influence your discussion or decision-making.**

**If the connection does not amount to an interest then you have nothing to declare and no reason to withdraw.**

**If the connection amounts to an interest, declare it as soon as possible and leave the meeting when the agenda item comes up.**

**When you declare an interest, identify the agenda item and give enough information so that the public understands what it is and why you are declaring it.**

**Even if the connection does not amount to an interest you can make a statement about it for the purposes of transparency.**

**More detailed information is on the next page.**

Look at each item on the agenda, consider if there is a “connection”, take advice if necessary from appropriate officers in plenty of time. A connection is any link between the item of business and:-

- you
- a person you are associated with (e.g., employer, business partner, domestic partner, family member)
- a body or organisation you are associated with (e.g., outside body, community group, charity)

Anything in your Register of Interests is a connection unless one of the following exceptions applies.

A connection does not exist where:-

- you are a council tax payer, a rate payer, or a council house tenant, including at budget-setting meetings
- services delivered to the public are being considered, including at budget-setting meetings
- councillors’ remuneration, expenses, support services or pensions are being considered
- you are on an outside body through a council appointment or nomination unless it is for regulatory business or you have a personal conflict due to your connections, actions or legal obligations
- you hold a view in advance on a policy issue, have discussed that view, have expressed that view in public, or have asked for support for it

If you see a connection then you have to decide if it is an “interest” by applying the objective test. The objective test is whether or not a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard your connection to a particular matter as being so significant that it would be considered as being likely to influence your discussion or decision-making.

If the connection amounts to an interest then:-

- declare the interest in enough detail that members of the public will understand what it is
- leave the meeting room (physical or online) when that item is being considered
- do not contact colleagues participating in the item of business

Even if decide your connection is not an interest you can voluntarily make a statement about it for the record and for the purposes of transparency.

The relevant documents are:-

- [Councillors’ Code of Conduct, part 5](#)
- [Standards Commission Guidance, paragraphs 129-166](#)
- [Advice note for councillors on how to declare interests](#)

If you require assistance, contact:-

- James Millar, Interim Monitoring Officer and Governance Manager, 01506 281613, [james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk)
- Carol Johnston, Chief Solicitor and Depute Monitoring Officer, 01506 281626, [carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk)
- Committee Services Team, 01506 281604, 01506 281621  
[committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk)

January 2022

MINUTE of MEETING of the HOUSING SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 26 JANUARY 2023.

Present – Councillors George Paul (Chair), Andrew McGuire, Alison Adamson, Robert De Bold, Jim Dickson, Cathy Muldoon and Tony Pearson

Apologies – Jessie Duncan (Tenant's Panel) and Donald Stavert (Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils)

In attendance

Julie Whitelaw - Lead Officer, Interim Head of Housing, Customer & Building Services, West Lothian Council

Graeme Struthers - Depute Chief Executive, West Lothian Council

Marjory Mackie - Housing Strategy Manager, West Lothian Council

Sarah Kelly - Customer Service Manager (Housing Needs), West Lothian Council

Pamela Bell - Senior Service Accountant, West Lothian Council

Grant Taylor - Building Services Manager, West Lothian Council

Pat Tedford – Unite

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTES

The panel confirmed the Minutes of its meeting held on 15 November 2022 as a correct record. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the current challenges faced by the council in meeting its statutory homeless function, the subsequent impacts on the availability of emergency and temporary accommodation and the areas of budget pressure in the Housing Need service.

The largest increase in reasons for applications, noted in D2 of the report, was highlighted and a breakdown was requested, in particular, to attribute the figures to the following; the cost of living crisis, mortgage interest rate increases and/or landlord portfolio reduction. Officers advised the information would be obtained and circulated to members on completion.

It was recommended that the panel note:

1. the progress to date in preventing homelessness, the current challenges faced in meeting the council's statutory homeless function and the delivery of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan; and

2. the current improvement actions and suggestions for transformative change to further shift the balance to embed the prevention approach which the RRTP had delivered to date for the remainder of the 5-year plan.

#### Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To request that members were provided with a breakdown of the homelessness data provided in section D2 to detail whether applications were attributed to; the cost of living crisis, mortgage interest rate increases and/or landlord portfolio reduction.

#### 4. 2022/23 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - MONTH 6 MONITORING REPORT

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on the financial performance of the Housing Services portfolio for the General Fund revenue budget.

It was recommended that the panel note:

1. the financial performance of the Housing Services portfolio as at month 6;
2. that the Housing Services portfolio position at month 6 was part of the overall council budget position reported to Council Executive on 15 November 2022; and
3. the actions to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

#### Decision

To note the contents of the report.

#### 5. DAMPNESS, VENTILATION AND AIR QUALITY IN COUNCIL HOUSING - REPORT

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services advising of the council procedures in relation to the applicable legislation regarding dampness, ventilation and air quality in council housing.

Discussion took place concerning the environmental sensors, which measured temperature, humidity and CO2 emissions and their installation in a pilot of 100 properties. Officers advised that the outcome of this pilot could be included in a future report to the panel on dampness, ventilation and air quality in council housing.

It was recommended that the panel note and consider:

1. the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) included a number of criteria in relation to dampness and ventilation;
2. the council had a proactive approach in responding to tenant enquiries or requests for inspections regarding dampness or condensation;
3. the council had an ongoing stock condition survey programme, and initial findings did not indicate a systemic issue with dampness within any particular type of house,
4. and note the key findings from the Coroner's report into the death of Awaab Ishakand; and
5. the future housing capital investment programme would include air quality and ventilation measures along with other energy efficiency measures.

#### Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To note it was intended to provide further reports to the panel on this subject in which the findings of the environmental sensor pilot could be included.

#### 6. QUICK BUILD TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on concepts and funding regarding quick build solutions, including the use of cabins and containers to assist with the homeless situation and as an alternative to B&B/Hotel accommodation.

Following discussion, a short-life working group was suggested to address this subject which would comprise both councillors and officers. It was the intention that a proposal would be submitted to Council Executive for approval.

It was recommended that the panel note the:

1. council's proactive approach to reducing homelessness;
2. current temporary accommodation provision;
3. position on funding of temporary accommodation;
4. key findings of a review of quick build concepts and the work being undertaken to reduce the use of B&B/Hotel accommodation; and

5. next steps.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and.
2. To note the panel suggestion that a short life working group was proposed to the Council Executive to address this subject.

7. RENT CONSULTATION 2023/24 TO 2027/28

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing the outcome of the rent consultation conducted with West Lothian Council tenants from 27 October 2022 to 12 December 2022.

It was recommended that the panel note the outcome of the rent consultation.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2023/24 TO 2027/28 AND RENT LEVEL 2023/24

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive advising of the updated Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial plan for 2023/24 to 2027/28, as well as the proposed HRA budget, rent and service charges for 2023/24.

It was recommended that the panel note the proposed:

1. 3.5% per annum rent strategy and financial plan for 2023/24 to 2027/28, which would fund service needs and a five year housing capital investment programme;
2. rent increase of 3.5% for 2023/24 and the associated HRA budgets for 2023/24, as set out in the report; and
3. 3.5% rent strategy for Sheltered Housing and Homelessness properties, as well as related service and support charges, for 2023/24.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

9. HOUSING CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2023/24 TO 2027/28



The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive advising of the proposed Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2023/24 to 2027/28 and the proposed exemption for works under the terms of the Best Value Framework.

It was recommended that the panel note the proposed 2023/24 to 2027/28 Housing Capital Investment Programme and related funding as detailed in the report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

10. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.





## **HOUSING SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

#### **REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report the current levels of performance for Housing, Customer and Building Services indicators that are the responsibility of the Housing Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

To note the current performance on Housing, Customer and Building Services key performance indicators and determine if further action or enquiry is necessary.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; and Making best use of our resources.
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	In compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance and the principles of Best Value.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None.
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	There is no impact but this report is part of the agreed process for performance reporting.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	None.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	None.
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	N/A

## VIII Other consultations

Tenants Panel and service staff.

## D. TERMS OF REPORT

## D.1 Current Position – Q3 2022/23

Overseeing and challenging council performance is contained within the remit of every Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP). Scrutiny of performance by elected members in PDSPs forms a key part of the council's wider scrutiny and public performance reporting arrangements.

To support this, each PDSP is allocated areas of the Corporate Plan, strategic priorities and key council performance, relevant to the focus areas of the Panel, and receives quarterly and annual performance reports.

The relevant performance report for this PDSP is included within Appendix 1. Of the 10 performance indicators for Q3 2022/23, 4 are categorised as green, 1 is amber and 5 are red.

Each indicator in the appendix displays the latest note which offers an explanation from the service on current performance levels.

## D.2

## Red Performance Indicators

The current trend for those indicators that are currently at red status is summarised below:

- **P:BUS005\_6a.7 Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the overall housing repair service.** - In Q3 of 2022/23 we have not met target with 77.03% recorded against 875 responses. 201 responses indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. These came through an additional survey carried out by our Customer Excellence team. Delay in allocating jobs in operatives' calendars being the main issues. Performance is inclusive of where contractors are used on behalf of the council; for example, customers have commented on changes in appointments attended by contractors without prior notice. The service continues to work to actively engage with customers to ensure they are kept up to date where appointments for repairs are made/ amended.
- **P:HQSHOM2097\_9b- The percentage of Homeless Applications Assessed within 28 days-** performance dipped again this quarter, however, work is still continuing in reviewing processes across the service along with a service wide improvement plan to review process, procedures and incorporate training and greater emphasis in performance at team meeting and 1-1s. It is intended that this review will be completed by June 2023. Resourcing still remains an issue but again work is ongoing to resolve this.
- **P:HQSLETS001m\_9b Average length of time taken to re-let mainstream properties-** The overall trend shows that the service has been above target 8 out of the 13 months. December 2022 being highest month and April 2022 being the lowest.

Reasons are attributed to factors associated with the overall number of lets in the period, deployment of resources and the time applicants took in considering offers of housing in particular as we approached the festive break. Building Services resources are continuing to prioritise houses and repair to lettable standard and the service monitors weekly void performance. Building Services are also prioritising repairs in our emergency temporary accommodation to bring these up to lettable standard to ensure that these can be allocated as quickly as possible and alleviate Hotel and B&B usage by prioritising temporary tenancies.

- **P:HQS021q\_6b HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services-** Q3 2022/23 - 401 complaints were received within this quarter. A total of 26.4% (106) complaints were upheld and 13.9% (56) were part upheld, out of a total of 401 complaints received by HCBS in Q3 2022/23. The service continues to analyse complaints to identify improvement actions across the service. There is also a Complaint Working Group within the service which is working through a live action plan to try to improve complaints performance overall.
- **P:HSD311\_9b Cumulative Number of New Build Council Houses Completed-** During Quarter 3, there were an additional 63 council new build handovers across three sites - Mossend, Eagle Brae and Deans South. Bringing the total for the year to 114. There have been delays with handovers at Deans South and Hopetoun Street.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The performance information provides the Panel with a summary and status of the performance indicators which are the responsibility of this PDSP and actions being taken to address where current performance is below target.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None.

Appendices/Attachments: 1: HCBS Performance Q3 Report

Contact Person: Kirsty Weir, [Kirsty.Weir@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsty.Weir@westlothian.gov.uk) Tel No: 01506 281873.

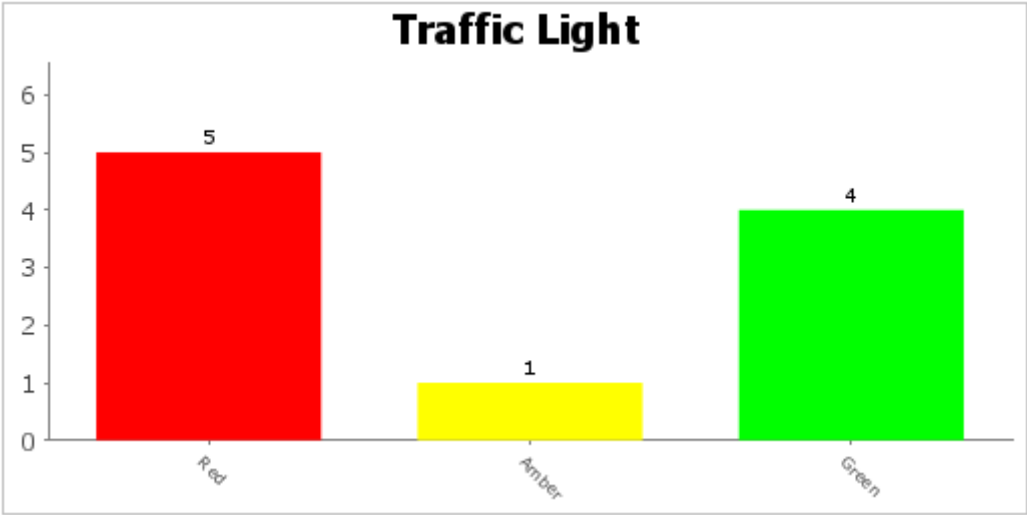
**JULIE WHITELAW, INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

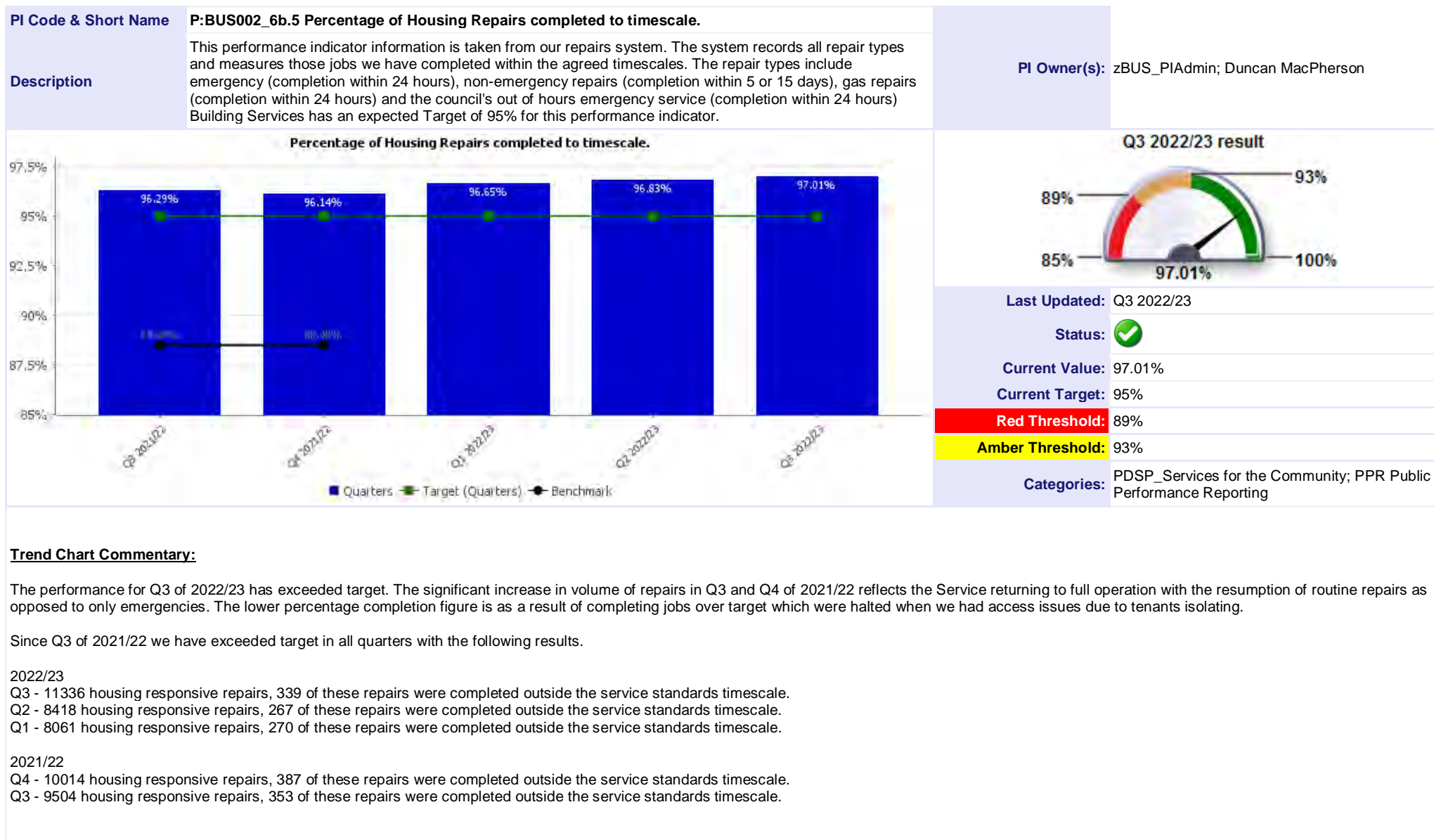
Date of Meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023

# HCBS PDSP Report

Data Label : OFFICIAL

Report Author: Kirsty Weir  
Generated on: 22 February 2023 16:07  
Report Layout: .NEW. PDSP\_PIs\_All(Detail)\_Grid





#### Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance for Q3 of 2022/23 has exceeded target. The significant increase in volume of repairs in Q3 and Q4 of 2021/22 reflects the Service returning to full operation with the resumption of routine repairs as opposed to only emergencies. The lower percentage completion figure is as a result of completing jobs over target which were halted when we had access issues due to tenants isolating.

Since Q3 of 2021/22 we have exceeded target in all quarters with the following results.

#### 2022/23

Q3 - 11336 housing responsive repairs, 339 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.

Q2 - 8418 housing responsive repairs, 267 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.

Q1 - 8061 housing responsive repairs, 270 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.

#### 2021/22

Q4 - 10014 housing responsive repairs, 387 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.

Q3 - 9504 housing responsive repairs, 353 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.

The trend chart shows that the performance since Q3 in 2021/22 has exceeded target for each quarter. This is due to the process of analysing any repairs with timing issues and implementing improved procedures.

The benchmarking figure used in the chart is the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year for similar sized Local Authorities which is collated at the end of each financial year.

In 2021/22 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 88.48% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed second highest of the 8 providing data. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

In 2020/21 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 94.21% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed highest of the 8 providing data. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

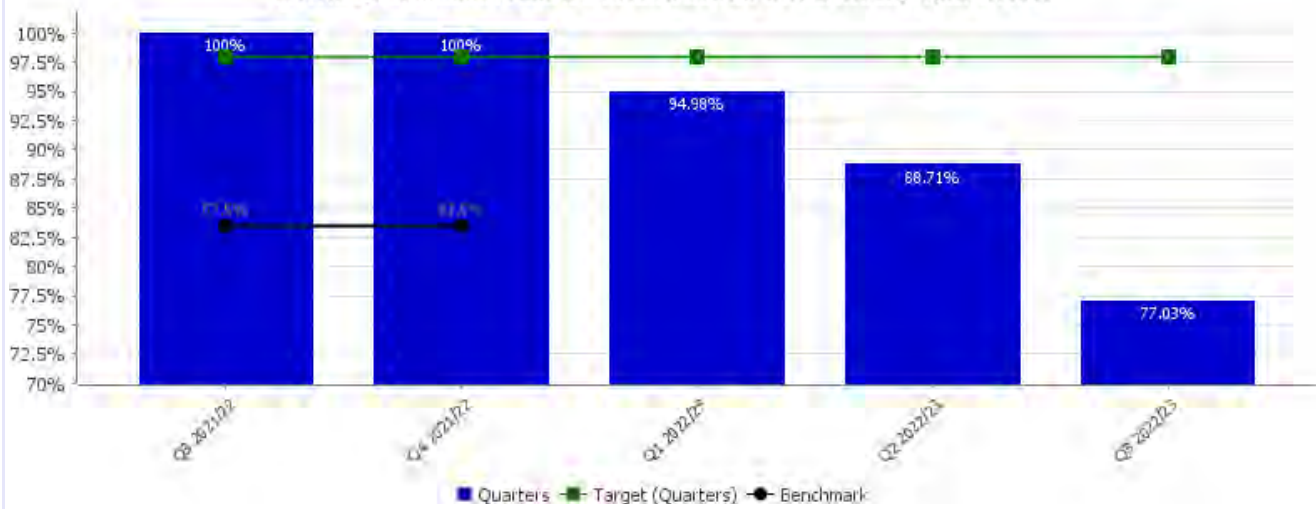
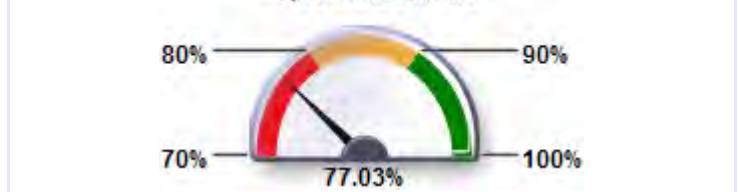



In 2019/20 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 95% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed second highest of the 8 providing data. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

The target of 95% is derived from discussion with Buildings Services and the Tenant's Panel with adherence to the Building Services Management Plan. This target is reviewed on a yearly basis and remains for 2022/23. .



PI Code & Short Name	P:BUS003_9b.2 Percentage of Non-Housing (Schools and Public Buildings) repairs completed to timescale (Annually)	PI Owner(s): zBUS_PAdmin; Duncan MacPherson																										
Description	This performance indicator information is taken from our repairs system. The system records all repair types in Schools and Public Buildings and measures those jobs we have completed within the agreed timescales. The repair types include emergency and non-emergency repairs. Timescales can vary from attendance within 3 hours for an emergency to 20 days for a routine repair. Building Services has a reviewed target of 90% for this performance indicator. Building Services is one of a number of contractors Construction Services use to carry out reactive repairs on the councils non housing properties																											
<div>Percentage of Non-Housing (Schools and Public Buildings) repairs completed to timescale (Annually)</div> <table><thead><tr><th>Year</th><th>Percentage (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2017/18</td><td>92.53%</td></tr><tr><td>2018/19</td><td>92.04%</td></tr><tr><td>2019/20</td><td>90.11%</td></tr><tr><td>2020/21</td><td>95.77%</td></tr><tr><td>2021/22</td><td>86.74%</td></tr></tbody></table>		Year	Percentage (%)	2017/18	92.53%	2018/19	92.04%	2019/20	90.11%	2020/21	95.77%	2021/22	86.74%	<div>2021/22 result</div> <table><tbody><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>2021/22</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>86.74%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>90%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>82%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>86%</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>PPR Public Performance Reporting</td></tr></tbody></table>	Last Updated:	2021/22	Status:	✓	Current Value:	86.74%	Current Target:	90%	Red Threshold:	82%	Amber Threshold:	86%	Categories:	PPR Public Performance Reporting
Year	Percentage (%)																											
2017/18	92.53%																											
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2021/22	86.74%																											
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Categories:	PPR Public Performance Reporting																											
<div>Trend Chart Commentary:</div> <p>This annual performance indicator trend shows the target was not met in 2021/22 after displaying continued improvement in the previous year's figures with a slight decrease of 1.93% in 2019/20. In 2021/22 Building Services completed 2731 repairs jobs with 2369 of the jobs complete within Target. The reduction in the number of jobs completed is due to the impact of Covid restrictions on the business and the reduction in maintaining service levels has be mainly due to the operating resources being utilised in other areas of the business to assist in absence issues due to isolation resulting from Covid. We are striving to maintain the relevant numbers of operatives required in the Non-Housing section to retain the higher levels of performance required going forward.</p> <p>Performance can vary depending on the volume and complexity of repairs requested by our customers. After analysis of internal processes within both Building Services and Construction Services we have seen an increase in jobs completed within the agreed timescale.</p> <p>Building Services had a target of 90% for this performance indicator for 2021/22 after consultation with Construction Services and will remain for 2022/23.</p> <p>In 2021/22 Building Services completed 2731 repairs jobs with 2369 of the jobs complete within Target. In 2020/21 Building Services completed 2270 repairs jobs with 2174 of the jobs complete within Target. In 2019/20 Building Services completed 3366 repairs jobs with 3033 of the jobs complete within Target. In 2018/19 Building Services carried out 4735 Non-Housing jobs with 4358 within Target In 2017/18 Building Services carried out 4874 Non-Housing jobs with 4510 within Target.</p>																												

Benchmarking data for this Performance Indicator is not available as Annual Returns do not include this information.

PI Code & Short Name	P:BUS005_6a.7 Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the overall housing repair service.															
Description	<p>This performance indicator reports on the percentage of customers who gave a positive response on their experience with the overall housing repair service they received. Other questions include 'Was the member who dealt with your request helpful, Are you satisfied with the quality of the work provided, Did the operative who carried out the work tidy up before leaving and Was the work completed in time'.</p> <p>Customers are asked to complete a customer survey once the repair has been carried out. The survey information is captured by paper surveys and personal digital assistants (PDA). This indicator is the number of respondents who chose 'a positive response, as in Very and Fairly satisfied, as a percentage of the overall responses. Measuring customer satisfaction helps ensure that we continue to provide an excellent repairs and maintenance service that meets tenants' expectations. The results are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers. In 2013/14 as part of the introduction of Scottish Housing Charter Building Services now report customer satisfaction using the 5-point scale responses. The categories are, Very satisfied, Fairly Satisfied, Neither or, Fairly Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied.</p>															
 <table><caption>Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the overall housing repair service.</caption><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q3 2021/22</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2021/22</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2022/23</td><td>94.98%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2022/23</td><td>88.71%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2022/23</td><td>77.03%</td></tr></tbody></table>		Quarter	Percentage	Q3 2021/22	100%	Q4 2021/22	100%	Q1 2022/23	94.98%	Q2 2022/23	88.71%	Q3 2022/23	77.03%	<p>PI Owner(s): zBUS_PAdmin; Grant Taylor</p>		
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<p><b>Trend Chart Commentary</b></p> <p>In Q3 of 2022/23 we have not met target with 77.03% recorded against 875 responses. 201 responses indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. These came through an additional survey carried out by our Customer Excellence team. Delay in allocating jobs in operatives' calendars being the main issues. Performance is inclusive of where contractors are used on behalf of the council; for example, customers have commented on changes in appointments attended by contractors without prior notice. The service continues to work to actively engage with customers to ensure they are kept up to date where appointments for repairs are made/ amended.</p> <p>In Q2 of 2022/23 we have not met target with 88.71% recorded against 1010 responses. 114 responses indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. These came through an additional survey carried out by our Customer Excellence team.</p> <p>In Q1 of 2022/23 we have not met target with 94.98% recorded against 635 responses. 32 responses indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. These came through an additional survey carried out by our Customer Excellence team</p>		<p><b>Q3 2022/23 result</b></p>  <table><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>Q3 2022/23</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>77.03%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>98%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>80%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>90%</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>PDSP_Services for the Community; PPR Public Performance Reporting</td></tr></table>	Last Updated:	Q3 2022/23	Status:		Current Value:	77.03%	Current Target:	98%	Red Threshold:	80%	Amber Threshold:	90%	Categories:	PDSP_Services for the Community; PPR Public Performance Reporting
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Amber Threshold:	90%															
Categories:	PDSP_Services for the Community; PPR Public Performance Reporting															

In Q4 of 2021/22 we have exceeded target with 100% recorded against 274 responses. No response indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. Responses were down due to the reduction in visits resulting from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

In Q3 of 2021/22 we have exceeded target with 100% recorded against 439 responses. No response indicated that they were very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied or neither with the housing repairs service. Responses were down due to the reduction in visits resulting from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

In 2021/22 the Scottish Housing Network average customer satisfaction figure for a comparable medium sized Local Authority was 83.5%. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

Surveys are monitored to investigate negative responses to assess their relativity to the repairs processes. As a result the service has recently implemented new customer communication cards to assist with the improvements. The repair teams analyse all feedback and arrange to contact all customers who provide non positive responses to discuss ways of improving the service.

The target has been agreed at 98% after review with the Tenant's Panel and will remain for 2022/23.

**PI Code & Short Name** P:HQSARR700m\_9b Total rent collection

**Description**

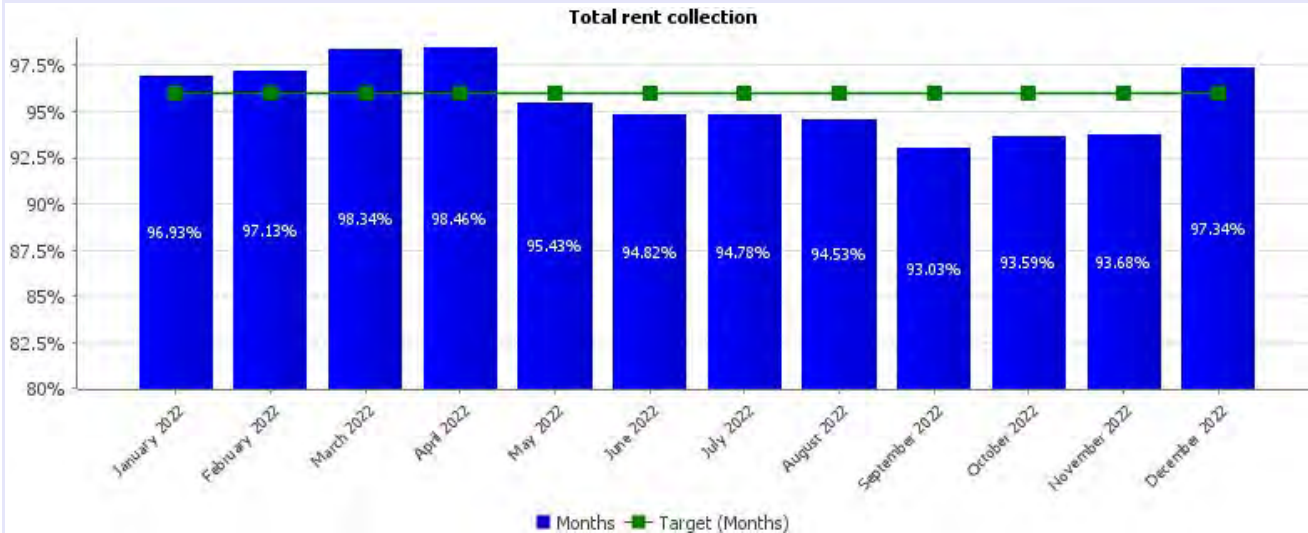
This indicator measures the rate at which Housing Customer & Building Services is collecting rent. This value is:

. The cumulative sum of rental payments made so far in the financial year by current tenants (excluding garages),  
 . divided by the cumulative charge we applied to rental accounts, to give us the year-to-date collection rate percentage.

This value emulates the collection value reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) as part of the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) which social landlords are required to complete each year. Please note this value will be slightly different as this is an operational value and does not include void loss as the reported figure would.

Source: HCBS Financial Dashboard

**PI Owner(s):** zHQSARR\_PAdmin; Alison Smith



**Last Updated:** December 2022

**Status:**

**Current Value:** 97.34%

**Current Target:** 96%

**Red Threshold:** 91.2%

**Amber Threshold:** 93.6%

**Categories:** High Level

**Trend Chart Commentary**

Total Rent Collected has been above the 96% target for 6 months out of the last 13. The fluctuation is due to the way customers pay, therefore there can be some variation from month to month. Customers will invariably make their payments to suit, their income (wages, benefits). There can be some extreme results each year in December and March; this is due to the fact that for most properties there are two non-collection weeks in each of these months and tenants can pay in this period whilst the rent debit is not raised.

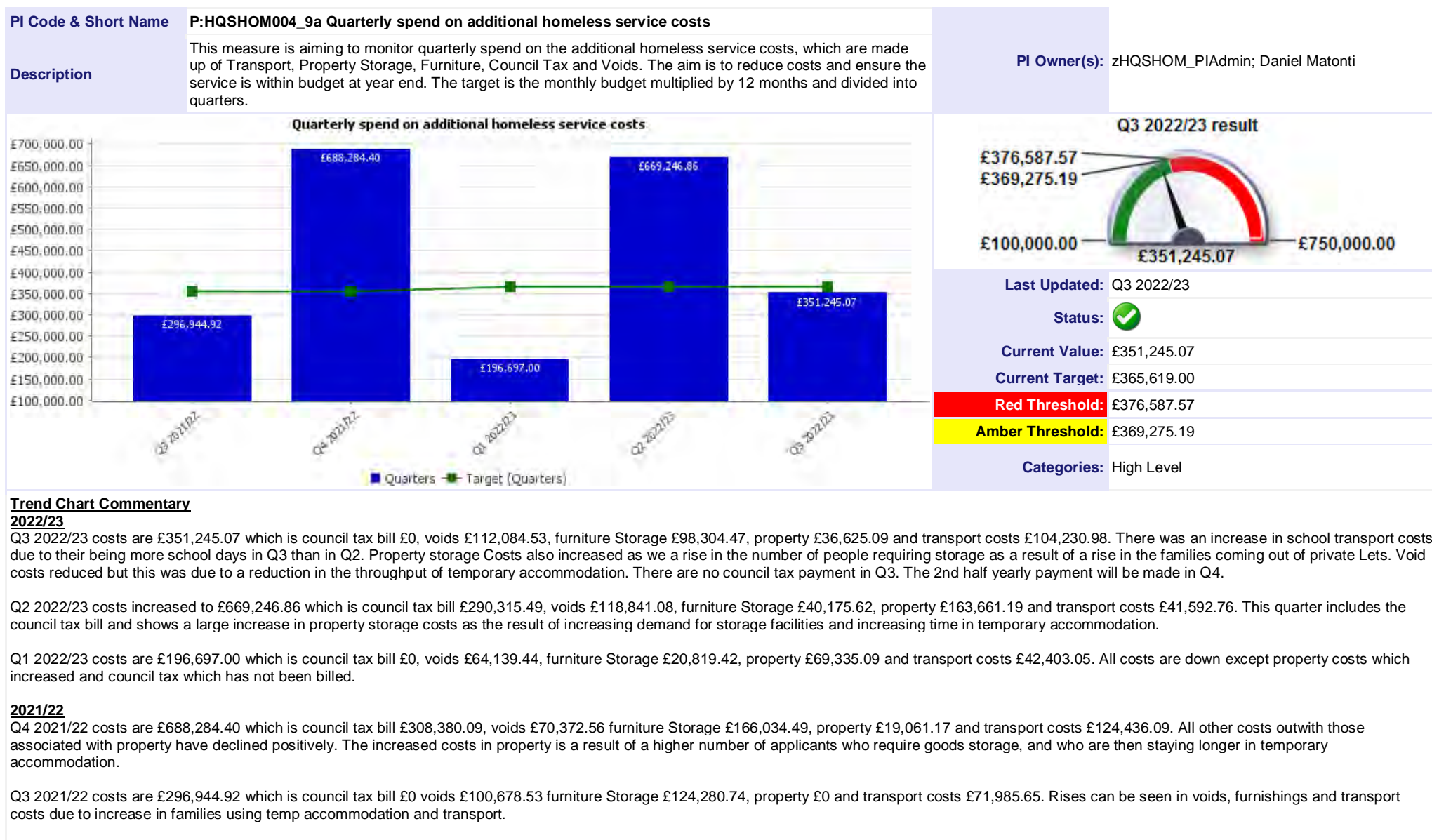
The accelerated move of customers from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit has had an impact on the amount of rent collected since it was introduced. When Full Service UC went live, the number of tenants on UC has increased substantially. Each customer that transitions across experiences a break in income as they move from weekly payments to a monthly payment in arrears. This will in the short term in almost all cases generate a month's arrears. Customers on extremely low income will find this difficult to catch up within their income. This transition will decrease collection for the foreseeable future.

The service is also seeing an impact following recovery period after Covid19 and actions are being progressed through the recovery process for arrears, however the cost of living crisis is a concern and the service is doing as much engagement, support and recovery actions practically possible to maximise rental income.

Benchmarking information published by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) shows that we performed marginally higher compared to the Scottish average of 99% and our SHN Peer Group average of 98.9%.

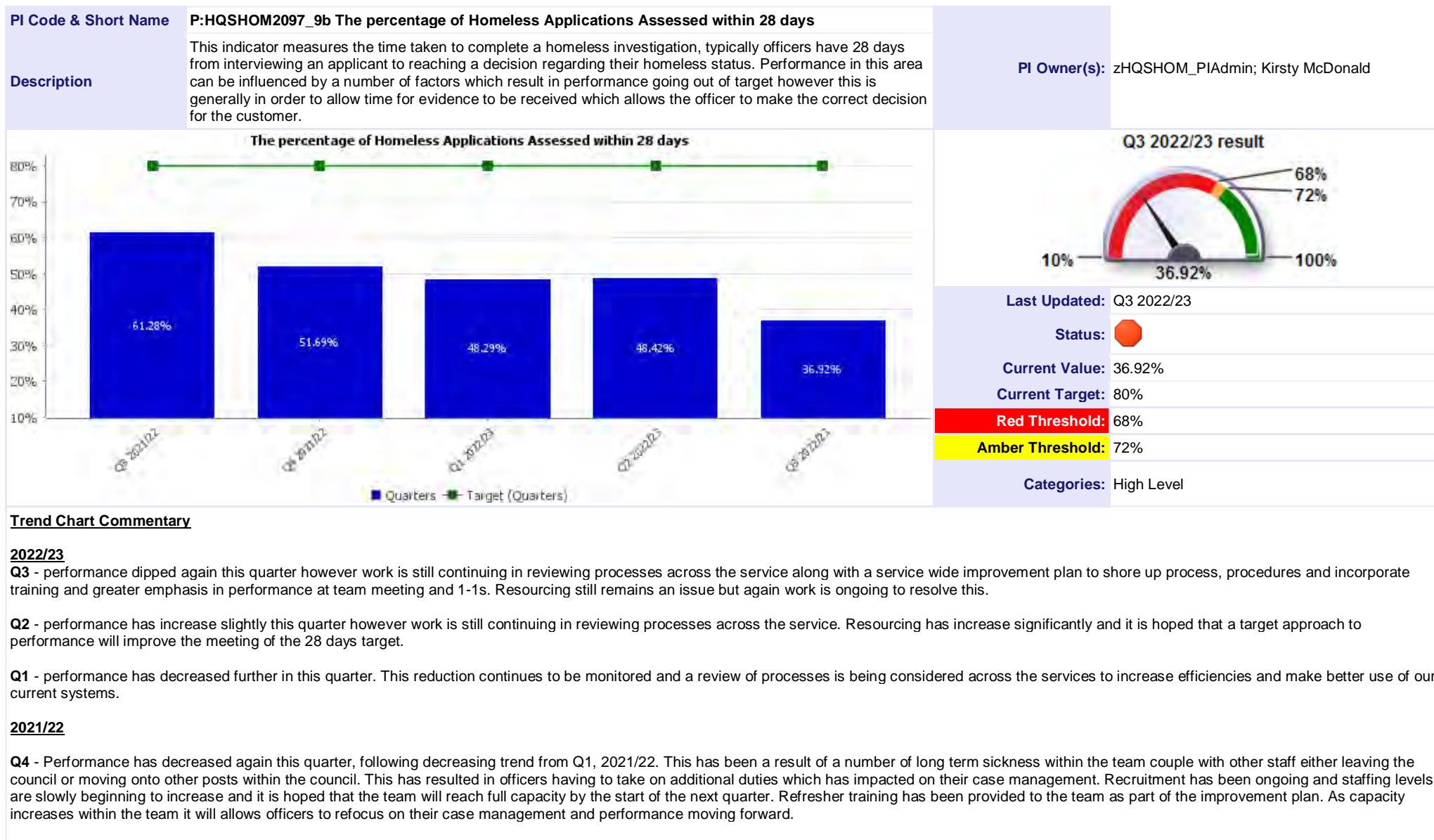
**Target:**

The Housing Operations monthly target of 96% is set and based on historical data, the HCBS collection rate when calculated in this way (HQSARC30 which is the service wide indicator sets overall target at 99% )  
The 2022/2023 target will remain at 96%.



Target for 2022/23 is £365,619 per quarter and £1,642,476 budget provided by finance





**Q3** - Performance decreased from previous quarter. Implementation of the improvement plan has progressed in Q2. In addition, staffing levels have increased allowing for Officer to have more time to focus on casework and performance. this is continuing to be monitored.

**Q2** - Performance declined in quarter as work priorities were realigned to allow front line officers to focus on other tasks. An improvement plan has now been developed with increased resources focused on improving casework, communication and performance.

**Target will remain at 80% for 2022/23**






#### Trend Chart Commentary

The overall trend shows that the service has been above target 8 out of the 13 months. December 2022 being highest month and April 2022 being the lowest. The January data will be updated when available normally around 15th of the month.

Reasons are attributed to factors associated with the overall number of lets in the period, deployment of resources, time applicants took in considering offers of housing in particular as we approached the festive break. Building Services resources are continuing to prioritise houses and repaired to lettable standard and the service monitors weekly void performance. The same resources are also prioritising our emergency temporary accommodation and resources are mobilised to alleviate B&B usage by prioritising temporary tenancies.

Benchmarking information published by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) indicates that our Peer Group average is 66 days during 2021/2022 our Service is ranked 5th out of the medium sized Local Authorities.

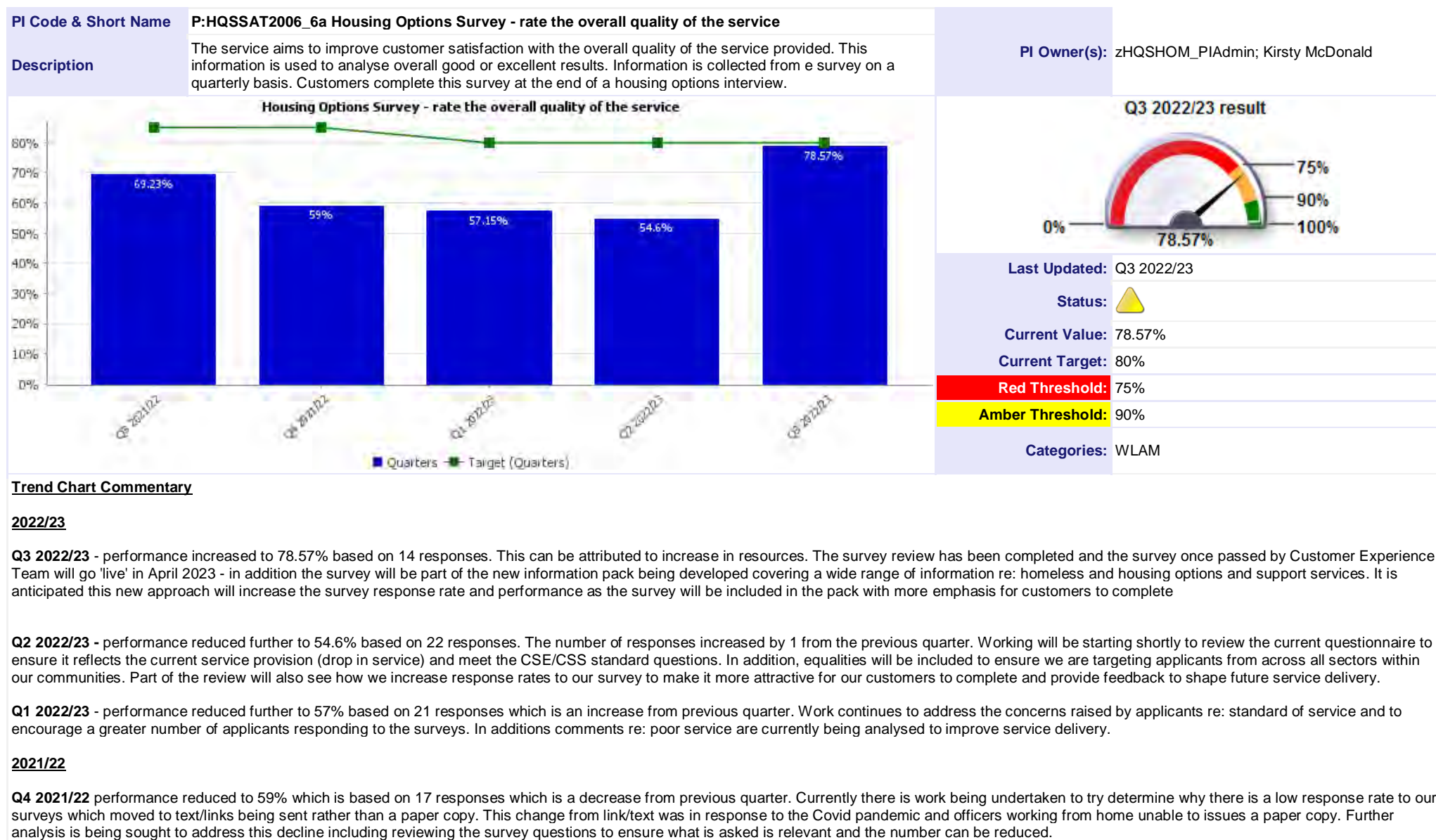
Target for void performance is set at 48 days for 2022/2023, this is a challenging target to strive for improvement in the letting figures.

PI Code & Short Name	P:HQS021q_6b HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services	PI Owner(s): zHQSOM_PAdmin; Kirsty Weir																																		
Description	The Performance and Change Team is responsible for monitoring complaints across Housing, Customer & Building Services. This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS). It is the total number of complaints received by HCBS at stage one and stage two. This is used to track customer feedback on the quality of our services.																																			
<div>HCBS – Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services</div>  <table><caption>HCBS Complaint Data</caption><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Complaints Received</th><th>Target</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q4 2021/22</td><td>312</td><td>240</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2021/22</td><td>232</td><td>240</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2021/22</td><td>351</td><td>240</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2022/23</td><td>381</td><td>240</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2022/23</td><td>401</td><td>240</td></tr></tbody></table>		Quarter	Complaints Received	Target	Q4 2021/22	312	240	Q3 2021/22	232	240	Q2 2021/22	351	240	Q1 2022/23	381	240	Q3 2022/23	401	240	<div>Cumulative result for Q3 2022/23 as of December 2022</div>  <table><caption>Gauge Chart Data</caption><thead><tr><th>Segment</th><th>Start Value</th><th>End Value</th><th>Color</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Green</td><td>70</td><td>252</td><td>Green</td></tr><tr><td>Amber</td><td>252</td><td>264</td><td>Amber</td></tr><tr><td>Red</td><td>264</td><td>410</td><td>Red</td></tr></tbody></table> <div>Last Updated: Q3 2022/23</div> <div>Status: </div> <div>Current Value: 401</div> <div>Current Target: 240</div> <div>Red Threshold: 264</div> <div>Amber Threshold: 252</div> <div>Categories: PPR Public Performance Reporting</div>	Segment	Start Value	End Value	Color	Green	70	252	Green	Amber	252	264	Amber	Red	264	410	Red
Quarter	Complaints Received	Target																																		
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<div><div><div><div>Trend Chart Commentary</div><div>The total number of complaints received by HCBS is as follows -</div><div>2022/23</div><div>Q3 2022/23 - 401 complaints were received within this quarter</div><div>Q2 2022/23 - 381 Complaints were received within this quarter</div><div>Q1 2022/23 - 351 Complaints were received within this quarter</div><div>2021/22</div><div>Q4 2021/22 - 232 Complaints were received within this quarter</div><div>Q3 2021/22 - 312 Complaints were received within this quarter</div><div>Q2 2021/22 - 340 Complaints were received within this quarter</div><div>The service has been above the target of 240 complaints received for 4 out of 5 completed quarters displayed in the chart.</div><div>Although the number of complaints will fluctuate quarter to quarter this can be impacted by seasonal factors, generally the highest complaint generators are Building Services, Housing Needs and Housing Operations. Customer and Communities and CSC receive a low level of complaints.</div></div></div></div>																																				

COVID 19 has impacted on the receipt and handling of complaints as:

*“West Lothian Council is set to focus on delivering essential services due to the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID 19). The Council will continue to focus on our statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. To enable this, the Council is suspending responses to enquiries or complaints about our service provision and will instead be focusing our efforts to prioritise our statutory services, caring for the vulnerable, cooperating with our Resilience Partners and supporting economic recovery “*

**Target:** the target was reviewed and left at 240 for complaints to be received within a quarter. This will be reviewed again in April 2023.



### Trend Chart Commentary

#### 2022/23

**Q3 2022/23** - performance increased to 78.57% based on 14 responses. This can be attributed to increase in resources. The survey review has been completed and the survey once passed by Customer Experience Team will go 'live' in April 2023 - in addition the survey will be part of the new information pack being developed covering a wide range of information re: homeless and housing options and support services. It is anticipated this new approach will increase the survey response rate and performance as the survey will be included in the pack with more emphasis for customers to complete

**Q2 2022/23** - performance reduced further to 54.6% based on 22 responses. The number of responses increased by 1 from the previous quarter. Working will be starting shortly to review the current questionnaire to ensure it reflects the current service provision (drop in service) and meet the CSE/CSS standard questions. In addition, equalities will be included to ensure we are targeting applicants from across all sectors within our communities. Part of the review will also see how we increase response rates to our survey to make it more attractive for our customers to complete and provide feedback to shape future service delivery.

**Q1 2022/23** - performance reduced further to 57% based on 21 responses which is an increase from previous quarter. Work continues to address the concerns raised by applicants re: standard of service and to encourage a greater number of applicants responding to the surveys. In additions comments re: poor service are currently being analysed to improve service delivery.

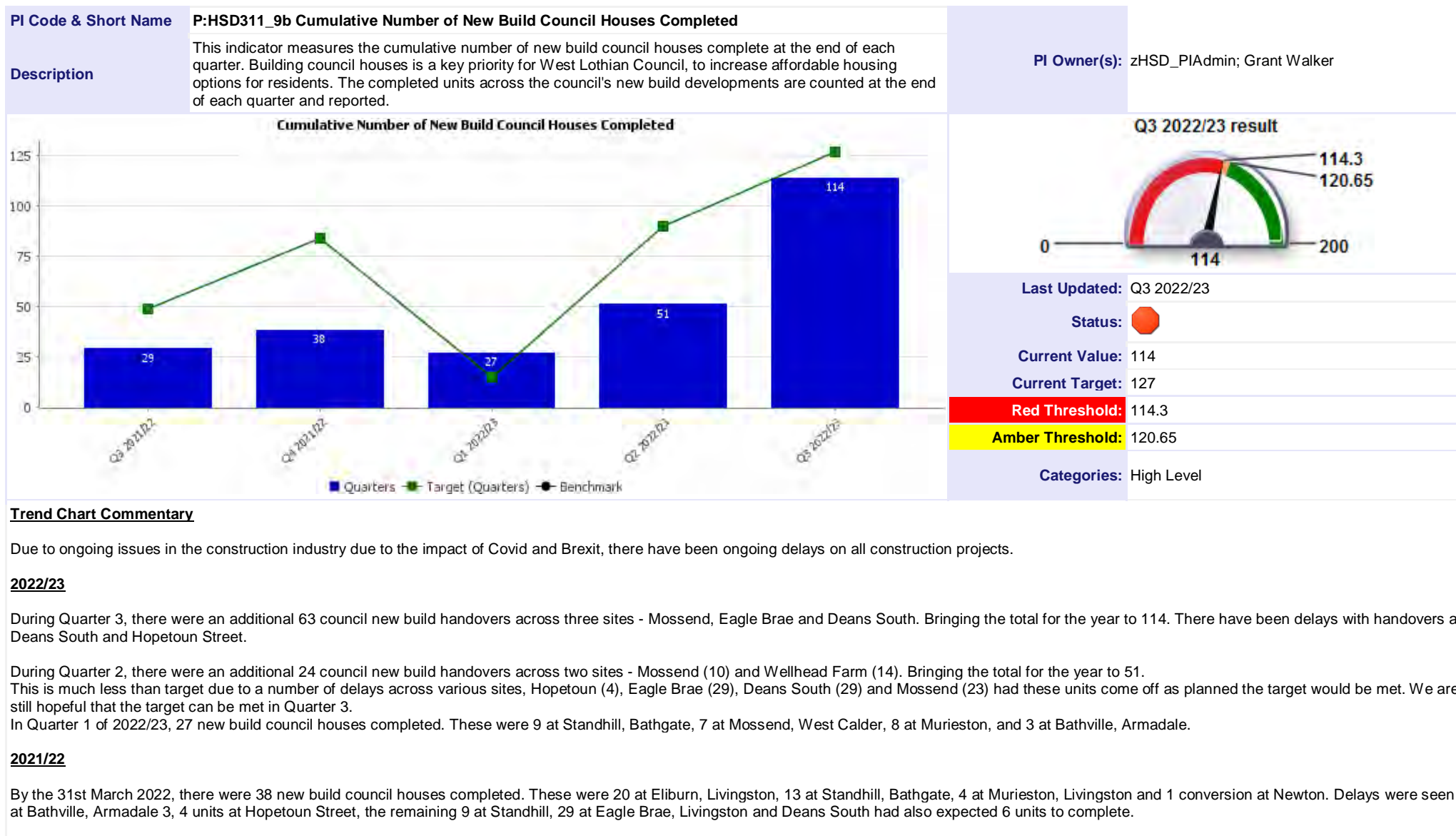
#### 2021/22

**Q4 2021/22** performance reduced to 59% which is based on 17 responses which is a decrease from previous quarter. Currently there is work being undertaken to try determine why there is a low response rate to our surveys which moved to text/links being sent rather than a paper copy. This change from link/text was in response to the Covid pandemic and officers working from home unable to issues a paper copy. Further analysis is being sought to address this decline including reviewing the survey questions to ensure what is asked is relevant and the number can be reduced.

**Q3 2021/22** performance reduced to 69% and is below the current target. Discussions are being taken forward on how to make our surveys more appealing/inviting to customers so we can increase our response level.

**Q2 2021/22** performance improved to 80.64% which is based on an increased response rate of 31 responses. This is attributed to an improvement in resources which has resulted in more communication and enhanced communication with customers.

**Target will remain at 80% for 2022/23**



**Trend Chart Commentary**

Due to ongoing issues in the construction industry due to the impact of Covid and Brexit, there have been ongoing delays on all construction projects.

**2022/23**

During Quarter 3, there were an additional 63 council new build handovers across three sites - Mossend, Eagle Brae and Deans South. Bringing the total for the year to 114. There have been delays with handovers at Deans South and Hopetoun Street.

During Quarter 2, there were an additional 24 council new build handovers across two sites - Mossend (10) and Wellhead Farm (14). Bringing the total for the year to 51. This is much less than target due to a number of delays across various sites, Hopetoun (4), Eagle Brae (29), Deans South (29) and Mossend (23) had these units come off as planned the target would be met. We are still hopeful that the target can be met in Quarter 3.

In Quarter 1 of 2022/23, 27 new build council houses completed. These were 9 at Standhill, Bathgate, 7 at Mossend, West Calder, 8 at Murieston, and 3 at Bathville, Armadale.

**2021/22**

By the 31st March 2022, there were 38 new build council houses completed. These were 20 at Elburn, Livingston, 13 at Standhill, Bathgate, 4 at Murieston, Livingston and 1 conversion at Newton. Delays were seen at Bathville, Armadale 3, 4 units at Hopetoun Street, the remaining 9 at Standhill, 29 at Eagle Brae, Livingston and Deans South had also expected 6 units to complete.



By Quarter 3, a total of 29 units had been completed for the financial year, as 9 units at Standhill were handed over. Projects that have slipped include the 3 at Bathville and 4 at Hopetoun Street. At Standhill, we had anticipated to have taken all 22 units at this stage however only 9 have been accepted. It is important to note at this stage that it is unlikely that there will be any handovers at Eagle Brae or Deans South this financial year.

The target for 2022/23 completions is set at 197 units.

These 197 units are made up of 3 at Bathville, 9 at Standhill, 4 at Hopetoun Street, 29 at Eagle Brae, 29 at Deans South, 69 at Mossend, 16 Cawburn Road and 38 at Murieston.



DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



## **HOUSING SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **PROPERTY TURNOVER OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2022**

#### **REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

#### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to inform the panel of property turnover for Quarter 3 of 2022/23 (1 October to 31 December 2022).

#### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

To note the current levels of activity relating to property turnover for Quarter 3 of 2022/23 and in particular to note:

1. The increase in property lets for Quarter 3 2022/23 compared to the same period last year;
2. Of the 49 communities in West Lothian, 17 had no properties available for let throughout Quarter 3 of 2022/23; and
3. 42% of lets throughout the quarter were allocated to people who were homeless.

#### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Focussing on our customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable Providing equality of opportunities Developing employees Making best use of our resources Working in partnership
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended and in accordance with the Homelessness (etc) (Scotland) Act 2003, Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. West Lothian Council Housing Allocation Policy
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	None
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Outcome 7 - We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian society. Outcome - 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where

we are able to access the services we need

<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	None
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	None
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	Consultation takes place with the Housing Network as well as individual tenant groups

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1 Quarterly Turnover**

The number of permanent lets for the period 1 October to 31 December 2022 was 204 compared to the same quarter last year when 167 properties were let. Of the 204 lets, 12 of them were due to exceptional circumstances. Details of all lets, their area and property sizes are provided in Appendix 1 and 2. Council stock figures by Ward are detailed in Appendix 3. Applicants can choose from a total of 49 communities.

The main points to note for Quarter 3 are:

- The communities with the highest percentage of total lets were Ladywell with 30 lets (14.7%); West Calder with 25 lets (12.2%); and Whitburn with 22 lets (10.8%)
- Eight communities had one mainstream property available to let – Linlithgow, Philipstoun, Dechmont, Eliburn, Uphall Station, Breich, Whiteside and Torphichen
- Eleven communities had between two and four properties available to let – Bridgend, Uphall, Winchburgh, Dedridge, Mid Calder, Addiewell, Longridge, Stoneyburn, Seafield, Wester Inch and Blackridge.
- There were 4 sheltered housing properties let in the quarter;

Across Quarter 3, the following 17 communities had no properties becoming available.

<b>No</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Number of properties remaining</b>	<b>Movement from Q2</b>
1	Alderstone	45	Changed position
2	Bellsquarry	4	No movement
3	Craigshill	3	Changed position
4	East Calder	296	Changed position
5	East Whitburn	45	Changed position
6	Eccelsmachan	4	No movement
7	Greenrigg	104	No movement
8	Howden	22	No movement
9	Kirknewton	40	No movement
10	Kirkton	14	No movement
11	Linlithgow bridge	84	Changed position
12	Livingston Village	8	No movement
13	Newton	12	No movement
14	Pumpherstoun	270	Changed position
15	Threemiletown	6	No movement
16	Westfield	69	No movement
17	Wilkieston	5	No movement

\*The movement column denotes which wards have no movement or a changed position from a position of property availability from the previous quarter.

**D2 Type of property**

The majority of properties that were available for letting in Quarter 3 were Cottage types at 104 (51%) followed by Four in a Block at 64 (31%) and Flats at 21 (10%), there were also 11 Maisonettes (5%) and 4 Sheltered Housing lets (3%).

In terms of property size, 49% of the lets were two-bedroom properties (100 Lets); 25% were three-bedroom properties (50 Lets); 24% were one-bedroom properties (46 lets); 3% were four-bedroom properties (6 Lets); and there were 2 five-bedroom properties let during the quarter.

**D3 Applicants**

The 204 properties let in Quarter 3 were allocated in accordance with the council's Allocations Policy.

Details on which applicant groups the properties in Quarter 3 were let to is detailed in the table below.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Number of Lets</b>	<b>Percentage Met</b>
Homeless (HL)	86	42%
Transfer (TL)	61	30%
General (GN)	54	26%
Housing with Care	3	2%
Unsatisfactory Housing (UH)	0	
Out with (OW)	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	

**E. Conclusion**

The report provides information on the property turnover and lets in Quarter 3 of 2022/23. The report highlights that there has been an increase in available lets when compared to the same quarter of 2021/22 and that there continues to be some communities where there is no movement in vacant properties at all.

**F. Background References**

None

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Quarter 3 Lets excluding Exceptional Circumstances

Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 Exceptional Circumstances Lets

Appendix 3 – Total Housing Stock per area

Contact Person: sarah.kelly@westlothian.gov.uk – Tel No- 01506 281877

**JULIE WHITELAW**  
**INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

Date of Meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### Appendix 1: Quarter 3 Lets excluding Exceptional Circumstances

Lets – October to December (excluding Exceptional Circumstances)								
Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					Total
			1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Armadale</b>	<i>Armadale</i>	Cottage	-	1	1	-	-	2
		Flat	4	3	-	-	-	7
		Four in Block	1	-	2	-	-	3
	<b>Armadale Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12</b>
	<i>Blackridge</i>	Cottage	-	2	1	-	-	3
		Four in Block	1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b>Blackridge Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>
	<i>Torphichen</i>		-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b>Torphichen Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Ward Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Bathgate</b>	<i>Bathgate</i>	Cottage	-	3	1	-	-	4
	<i>Bathgate</i>	Flat	1	-	-	-	-	1
		Four in Block	-	4	-	-	-	4
		Sheltered	1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b>Bathgate Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10</b>
	<i>Boghall</i>	Cottage	1	4	2	-	-	7
		Flat	-	4	-	-	-	4
		Four in Block	1	-	-	-	-	1
		Sheltered	2	-	-	-	-	2
	<b>Boghall Total</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14</b>
	Wester Inch	Cottage	1	-	-	-	-	1
		Flat	-	2	-	-	-	2
	<b>Wester Inch Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>
	Whiteside	Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b>Whiteside Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Ward Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28</b>

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
<b>Breich Valley</b>	<i>Addiewell</i>	Four in Block	-	1	1	-	-	2
	<b>Addiewell Total</b>		-	1	1	-	-	2
	<i>Breich</i>	Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b>Breich Total</b>		-	1	-	-	-	1
	Fauldhouse	Cottage	-	2	-	-	-	2
		Four in Block	-	1	1	-	-	2
		Maisonette	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b>Fauldhouse Total</b>		-	4	1	-	-	5
	<i>Longridge</i>	Cottage	-	1	1	-	-	2
	<b>Longridge Total</b>		-	1	1	-	-	2
	<i>Polbeth</i>	Cottage	2	5	1	-	-	8
		Flat	-	-	1	-	-	1
		Four in Block	-	1	1	1	-	3
	<b>Polbeth Total</b>		2	6	3	1	-	12
	<i>Stoneyburn</i>	Cottage	2	-	1	-	-	3
		Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b>Stoneyburn Total</b>		2	1	1	-	-	4
	<i>West Calder</i>	Cottage	-	9	6	-	1	16
		Flat	1	1	-	-	-	2
		Four in Block	4	1	-	-	-	5
	<b>West Calder Total</b>		5	11	6	-	1	23
	<b>Ward Total</b>		9	25	13	1	1	49

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
<b>Broxburn</b>	<i>Broxburn</i>	Flat	-	1	1	-	-	2
		Four in Block	1	2	-	-	-	3
		Maisonette	-	1	1	-	-	2
	<b>Broxburn Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7</b>
	<i>Dechmont</i>	Flat	-	-	1	-	-	1
	<b>Dechmont Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
	<i>Uphall</i>	Four in Block	-	1	1	-	-	2
	<b>Uphall Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>
	<i>Winchburgh</i>	Cottage	-	1	1	-	-	2
		Four in Block	1	-	-	-	-	1
		Maisonette	-	-	1	-	-	1
	<b>Winchburgh Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Ward Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>East Livingston</b>	<i>Mid Calder</i>	Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
		Sheltered	1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b>Mid Calder Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>
	<i>Uphall Station</i>	Cottage	1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b>Uphall Station total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Ward Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Linlithgow</b>	<i>Bridgend</i>	Four in Block	-	3	-	1	-	4
	<b>Bridgend Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>
	<i>Linlithgow</i>	Four in Block	-	-	1	-	-	1
	<b>Linlithgow Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
	<i>Philipstoun</i>	Cottage	-	-	1	-	-	1
	<b>Philipstoun Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Ward Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>



Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
North Livingston	<i>Deans</i>	Cottage	-	6	3	1	-	10
		Flat	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Deans Total</i></b>		-	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	-	<b>11</b>
	<i>Eliburn</i>	Four in Block	1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Eliburn Total</i></b>		<b>1</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
	<i>Knightsridge</i>	Cottage	1	1	3	-	-	5
	<b><i>Knightsridge Total</i></b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	-	-	<b>5</b>
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	-	<b>17</b>
South Livingston	<i>Dedridge</i>	Cottage	-	-	2	-	-	2
	<b><i>Dedridge Total</i></b>		-	-	<b>2</b>	-	-	<b>2</b>
	<i>Ladywell</i>	Cottage	-	7	7	1	1	16
		Four in Block	10	-	-	-	-	10
	<b><i>Ladywell Total</i></b>		<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>
	<i>Murieston</i>	Cottage	-	-	1	-	-	1
	<b><i>Murieston Total</i></b>		-	-	<b>1</b>	-	-	<b>1</b>
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>
Whitburn	<i>Blackburn</i>	Cottage	-	2	1	-	-	3
		Four in Block	2	-	1	-	-	3
		Maisonette	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Blackburn Total</i></b>		<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	-	-	<b>7</b>
	<i>Seafield</i>	Cottage	-	-	1	-	-	1
		Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Seafield Total</i></b>		-	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	-	-	<b>2</b>
	<i>Whitburn</i>	Cottage	1	3	-	-	-	4
		Flat	1	2	-	-	-	3
		Four in Block	3	5	-	-	-	8
		Maisonette	-	3	2	-	-	5
	<b><i>Whitburn Total</i></b>		<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	-	-	<b>20</b>
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	-	-	<b>29</b>
	<b><i>Total</i></b>		<b>45</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>192</b>

## Appendix 3 – Quarter 3 Exceptional Circumstances lets

Exceptional Circumstances Lets – October to December								
Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
<b>Bathgate</b>	<i>Bathgate</i>	Cottage	-	-	-	1	-	1
	<b><i>Bathgate Total</i></b>		-	-	-	1	-	1
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		-	-	-	1	-	1
<b>Breich Valley</b>	<i>Addiewell</i>	Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Addiewell Total</i></b>		-	1	-	-	-	1
	<i>West Calder</i>	Cottage	-	2	-	-	-	2
	<b><i>West Calder Total</i></b>		-	2	-	-	-	2
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		-	3	-	-	-	3
<b>Broxburn</b>	<i>Broxburn</i>	Flat	1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Broxburn Total</i></b>		1	-	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		1	-	-	-	-	1
<b>North Livingston</b>	<i>Deans</i>	Cottage	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Deans Total</i></b>		-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		-	1	-	-	-	1
<b>South Livingston</b>	<i>Ladywell</i>	Cottage	-	2	1	1	-	4
	<b><i>Ladywell Total</i></b>		-	2	1	1	-	4
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		-	2	1	1	-	4
<b>Whitburn</b>	<i>Whitburn</i>	Four in Block	-	1	-	-	-	1
		Maisonette	-	1	-	-	-	1
	<b><i>Whitburn Total</i></b>		-	2	-	-	-	2
	<b><i>Ward Total</i></b>		-	2	-	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>			1	8	1	2	-	12

**Appendix 3 – Council Stock Numbers 28/02/2023 (Mainstream Properties)**

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Number of Properties</b>
<b>1</b>	BRIDGEND	217
	LINLITHGOW	339
	LINLITHGOW BRIDGE	84
	NEWTON	12
	PHILPSTOUN	25
	THREEMILETOWN	6
		<b>683</b>
<b>2</b>	BROXBURN	866
	CRAIGSHILL	3
	DECHMONT	27
	ECCLESMACHAN	4
	UPHALL	207
	WINCHBURGH	278
		<b>1,385</b>
<b>3</b>	ALDERSTONE	45
	DEANS	592
	ELIBURN	273
	KIRKTON	14
	KNIGHTSRIDGE	629
	LIVINGSTON VILLAGE	8
		<b>1,561</b>
<b>4</b>	BELLSQUARRY	4
	DEDRIDGE	718
	HOWDEN	22
	LADYWELL	671
	MURIESTON	42
		<b>1,457</b>
<b>5</b>	EAST CALDER	296
	KIRKNEWTON	40
	MID CALDER	55
	PUMPHERSTON	270
	UPHALL STATION	113
	WILKIESTON	5
		<b>779</b>
<b>6</b>	ADDIEWELL	275
	BREICH	67
	FAULDHOUSE	615
	LONGRIDGE	91
	POLBETH	352
	STONEYBURN	238
	WEST CALDER	220
		<b>1,858</b>
<b>7</b>	BLACKBURN	844
	EAST WHITBURN	45
	GREENRIGG	104
	SEAFIELD	109
	WHITBURN	1,486
		<b>2,588</b>

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Number of Properties</b>
<b>8</b>	BATHGATE	1,059
	BOGHALL	649
	WESTER INCH	194
	WHITESIDE	39
		<b>1,941</b>
<b>9</b>	ARMADALE	1,278
	BLACKRIDGE	227
	TORPHICHEN	26
	WESTFIELD	69
		<b>1,600</b>
	<b>Total Stock</b>	<b>13,852</b>

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



## **HOUSING SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **UPDATE ON HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMMES FOR SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES (HEEPS: ABS) 2022/23 AND 2023/24**

#### **REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide an update on the progress made for the 2022/23 HEEPS:ABS programme of External Wall Insulation (EWI) and provide details of the proposed 2023/24 programme.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the panel:

1. Notes that the final funding allocation for the 2022/23 HEEPS: ABS programme is £1,044,085.72;
2. Notes the progress made on the 2022/23 HEEPS:ABS programme;
3. Notes that it is proposed to continue to provide HEEPS: ABS funding to home owners in the Dedridge area, and;
4. Notes the continuation of delegated powers to the Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services for non-substantive changes to the HEEPS:ABS programme.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	No policy or legal risks have been identified and all Health and Safety and Risk Assessment issues will be managed by adhering to CDM Regulations
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Will assist in improving the energy efficiency of the general housing stock and reduce the number of households living in Fuel Poverty

<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	We make the most efficient use of our resources by minimising our impacts on the built and natural environment.
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Staffing costs are met through the HEEPS: ABS funding and a grant of £1,044,085.72 has been awarded for 2022/23
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	N/A
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	Finance and Property Services

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

The 2022/23 HEEPS programme is the tenth year HEEPS: ABS funding has been available to West Lothian Council. The HEEPS: ABS programme has now been successfully managed in-house from January 2016 following the end of the management contract with Changeworks.

By May 2023 a total of 1,358 privately owned properties will have received External Wall Insulation (EWI) through HEEPS funding, whilst an additional 754 WLC properties have received EWI as part of Capital upgrade programmes. Appendix 1 attached summarises where these properties are as well as areas where further investment in EWI will be possible subject to funding being available.

### **D.2 Sources of Funding**

HEEPS: ABS bring together several sources of funding in order to deliver the EWI programme to streets of mixed tenure stock. The different funding sources are:

- HEEPS: ABS
- Energy Company Obligation (ECO)
- Warmer Homes Scotland (WHS)
- Home Owners Contribution
- WLC Capital Funding

HEEPS: ABS funding is provided by the Scottish Government to all Local Authorities on an annual basis to deliver energy efficiency improvement works, with a focus on solid wall insulation, to privately owned homes to reduce levels of fuel poverty. Funding is capped at £13,000 for detached, £10,250 for semi-detached homes, £9,000 for mid and end terraced homes and £8,500 for flats. Funding cannot be used for a local authority's own stock.

ECO funding is provided by large utility companies (those with over 250,000 customers) to privately owned households to install energy efficiency measures in order to reduce CO2 emissions while reducing fuel poverty and is a UK Government initiative. ECO funding can be used for any property regardless of tenure, however full information on ECO 4 eligibility criteria was not available at the outset of the 2022/23 programme. As a result, the contractor was unable to draw down any ECO funding for the 2022/23 project as the eligibility criteria and the guidance around how the funds could be used within the project were not finalised in time for the projects start date. It is anticipated this will be available for future programmes of work.

Warmer Homes Scotland has been developed to provide energy efficiency measures to private households determined to be the most vulnerable to living in fuel poverty. This is separate from the HEEPS: ABS programme, however it is possible for a household to receive grant funding for EWI through this scheme. There is a set of eligibility criteria that households have to meet (see Appendix 2) in order to receive support through Warmer Homes Scotland.

Home owners are required to pay a contribution toward the works as, on average, the total cost of the EWI measure is not covered by the HEEPS: ABS funding alone.

The Housing Capital Investment budget is used to meet the cost of the works to council owned housing stock.

### **D.3 Progress on HEEPS: ABS 2022/23**

For financial year 2022/23 the council was awarded £1,044,085.72 HEEPS: ABS funding which was used to target privately owned properties of No Fines construction in:

- Quentin Rise, Livingston
- Palmer Rise, Livingston

MP Rendering Ltd was awarded the contract to install External Wall Insulation (EWI) to the properties. The 2022/23 programme aimed to pick up where the 2021/22 programme left off by retrofitting External Wall Insulation to 76 properties in Quentin Rise and Palmer Rise focusing on hard to treat properties of no-fines construction.

Sign-ups were successful with the target of 76 properties achieved. Due to an increase in interest in this year's programme an application for increased funding was made to the Scottish Government. This application was successful and additional funding of £75,785 was granted taking the total funding claimed to £1,044,085.72. This allowed additional properties to be added to the programme taking the total number of properties receiving energy efficiency measures to 86.

### **D.4 Proposed programme for 2023/24**

It is proposed to provide any HEEPS: ABS funding the council is awarded to support private home owners in the West Lothian area. The focus for HEEPS: ABS funding for financial year 2023/24 is therefore likely to continue to be directed to hard to treat properties in the Dedridge area of Livingston and surrounding areas to continue with the area-based approach which is central to the programme.

The main focus of HEEPS: ABS is to address and reduce levels of fuel poverty. As such, officers have assessed the streets proposed to be included in the 2023/24 programme to determine those households most vulnerable to fuel poverty; this is based on information from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Register, Council Tax Banding and Home Analytics.

It is proposed to continue to prioritise funding to households in the streets that are identified to have the highest probability of families living in fuel poverty in hard to treat properties. It is proposed to prioritise funding to streets in the order below based on the above priority criterion, until funding is exhausted:

#### **1. Norman Rise**

The Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services will continue to retain delegated powers over the management of the programme for non-substantive changes, including areas included in the projects, following approval by Council Executive on 22 June 2021.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The council continues to successfully deliver the HEEPS: ABS scheme to help alleviate fuel poverty in West Lothian and officers have proposed minor changes in the way the scheme is managed in order to maximise the benefit from the funding received. This report is based on the information provided from Scottish Government and on the current situation with regards to HEEPS: ABS which is subject to change.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Housing Services PDSP August 2022- Update on Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS) 2021/22 and 2022/23

Services for the Community PDSP June 2021- Update on Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS) 2019/20 and 2020/21

Council Executive June 2021- Update on Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS) 2019/20 and 2020/21

Various other update reports to PDSP and Council Executive on the Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS)

Appendices/Attachments: Two

1. Summary of properties improved by HEEPS:ABS and those for future consideration
2. Criteria for Warmer Homes Scotland Eligibility

Contact Person: Robert Smith, Housing Investment Manager 01506 282386

[robert.smith@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:robert.smith@westlothian.gov.uk)

**Julie Whitelaw**

**Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services**

**28 March 2023**



## Appendix 1

<b>Areas of No Fines Properties that have received EWI</b>			
<b>Street</b>	<b>WLC Properties</b>	<b>Owner Occupier</b>	<b>Area</b>
East Glen Avenue	21	34	Deans
West Glen Avenue	9	26	Deans
Birkenshaw Way	29	75	Armadale
Woodend Walk	0	90	Armadale
McCallum Court	18	33	Armadale
Denholm Grove	5	27	Armadale
Peveril Rise	23	88	Dedridge
Templar Rise	4	38	Dedridge
Kirk Brae	20	29	Longridge
Heaney Avenue	22	46	Pumpherstons
Erskine Way	38	19	Knightsridge
Gordon Way	31	31	Knightsridge
Calgary Avenue	0	38	Howden
Edmonton Avenue	0	34	Howden
Fergus Avenue	0	80	Howden
Labrador Avenue	0	9	Howden
Nelson Avenue	1	81	Howden
Quebec Avenue	0	14	Howden
Toronto Avenue	0	42	Howden
Vancouver Avenue	0	40	Howden
Grandby Avenue	0	72	Howden
Cunigar Gardens	0	12	Mid Calder
Camps Rigg	15	43	Knightsridge
Davidson Way	26	9	Knightsridge
Fells Rigg	32	40	Knightsridge
Ferguson Way	50	9	Knightsridge
Eagle Brae	5	0	Ladywell
Gowan Bank	29	0	Ladywell
Staunton Rise	13	65	Dedridge
Talisman Rise	4	42	Dedridge
Palmer Rise	21	44	Dedridge
Quentin Rise	29	42	Dedridge
Sutherland Way	75	0	Knightsridge
Deanswood Park	29	0	Deans
Elie Avenue	30	0	Deans
Kenmore Avenue	33	37	Deans
Lenzie Avenue	69	69	Deans
Jubilee Avenue	48	0	Deans
Beech Place	22	0	Elburn
Lethan Grove	3	0	Pumpherstons
Total	754	1358	

Areas of No Fines Properties to have EWI			
Street	WLC Properties	Owner Occupier	Area
Lenzie Avenue	0	59	Deans
Jubilee Avenue	1	124	Deans
Huntly Avenue	0	79	Deans
Kenmore Avenue	0	22	Deans
Elie Avenue	0	73	Deans
Deanswood Park	0	169	Deans
Sutherland Way	0	234	Knightsridge
Ferguson Way	0	32	Knightsridge
Fells Rigg	0	63	Knightsridge
Davidson Way	0	19	Knightsridge
Camps Rigg	0	153	Knightsridge
Quentin Rise	0	31	Dedridge
Palmer Rise	0	25	Dedridge
Staunton Rise	0	74	Dedridge
Talisman Rise	0	66	Dedridge
Gowanbank	0	107	Ladywell
Eagle Brae	0	62	Ladywell
Beech Place	0	101	Eliburn
Letham Grove	0	17	Pumpherstons
Norman Rise	61	186	Dedridge
	62	1696	

## **Appendix 2**

### **CRITERIA FOR WARMER HOMES SCOTLAND ELIGIBILITY**

- Be a homeowner or the tenant of a private-sector landlord
  - Live in the home as your main residence
  - Have lived there for at least 12 months (unless in receipt of a DS1500 or BASRiS form)
  - Live in home with a poor energy rating - this will be assessed by a surveyor
  - Live in a home that meets the tolerable living standard set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 or, where the home does not meet the tolerable living standard, this will not impact on the effectiveness of the measures recommended for installation under the scheme
- 
- Householders must not have received support for energy efficiency improvements through Warmer Homes Scotland funding in the last five years.
  - Be 75 or over and have no working heating system
- 
- Be 16 or over (working age) and be in receipt of a **passport benefit or income-related benefit**
- 
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
  - Adult Disability Payment (ADP)
  - Disability Living Allowance (DLA)\*
  - Child Disability Payment (CDP)\*
  - Armed Forces Independence Payment/ War Disablement Payment
  - Industrial Injuries Payment
  - Carer's Allowance
  - Attendance Allowance

#### **Income-related benefits:**

- Council tax benefit/reduction scheme (excluding 25% discount e.g. single person or student)
- Universal Credit
- Housing benefit/allowance
- Income based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support
- Pension Credit (guarantee element)
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

**\*If your household receives low or medium rate DLA/CDP you need to also have an income-related benefit to be eligible.**



DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



## HOUSING SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

### UPDATE TO ENERGY COMPANY OBLIGATION (ECO) SCHEME FLEXIBLE ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT OF INTENT.

#### REPORT BY INTERIM HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

##### A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the updated Statement of Intent for West Lothian Council for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) fifth iteration (ECO4) and updated Flexible Eligibility scheme criteria.

##### B. RECOMMENDATION

To note and consider the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. Notes that the UK Government has updated the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Scheme with the new iteration known as ECO4 and ECO-Flex;
2. Notes that the qualifying criteria for ECO-Flex is no longer defined by Local Authorities, and guidance is set by OFGEM but still must be published in a Statement of Intent document;
3. Notes that ECO-Flex will still apply to owner occupier and private rented households;
4. Notes that publishing a Statement of Intent will allow for increased numbers of households to benefit from ECO support to improve the energy efficiency of their home;
5. Notes that publishing a Statement of Intent will help to tackle levels of fuel poverty in West Lothian and;
6. Notes that the proposed Statement of Intent will be presented for approval to the Council Executive on 25 April 2023 and will be published on the council's website thereafter.

##### C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	<b>Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	No policy or legal risks have been identified.

<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Will assist in improving the energy efficiency of the general housing stock and reduce the number of households living in Fuel Poverty
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Will help to reduce households living in Fuel Poverty
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Publishing a Statement of Intent will not require additional resources.
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	West Lothian Advice Shop

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 BACKGROUND**

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) was introduced by the UK Government in 2013 to fund energy efficiency measures throughout the UK. The Energy Company Obligation is a levy which works by placing a Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) on the medium and large-scale energy suppliers which is now deemed to be those with over 150,000 customers.

The funds generated by this levy are used by those companies to meet carbon reduction targets set by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM). These companies achieve these targets by providing funding towards domestic energy efficiency improvement projects. In addition to the carbon targets these companies are also set targets to ensure that funding is targeted towards low income households to help reduce fuel poverty.

The scheme has been through four previous iterations ECO, ECO1, ECO2 and ECO3. This new iteration, ECO4, will run through to 31/03/2026.

### **D.2 ECO-Flex**

The previous iteration of ECO, introduced the ECO-Flex scheme which enabled private households to access funding for energy efficiency measures if they met Local Authority set eligibility criteria.

Under the new ECO4 regulations ECO-Flex eligibility criteria are now set by OFGEM regulations which cover all Local Authorities. There are four routes through which funding can be accessed. The new regulations also allow for other organisations to refer households in fuel poverty or provide a declaration. Local Authorities and Suppliers will now also have to collect and retain evidence of eligibility and compliance requirements for the ECO-Flex scheme which can be audited by OFGEM.

The Home Energy Efficiency Programme: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS) has in the past accessed ECO funding to help reduce cost of works for owner occupiers. This will still be possible however the blending of ECO funding with other government funding is

no longer permitted. Funding for individual measures which meet the criteria can be used or a whole house approach within the Area Based Scheme replacing ABS funding for that property.

### D.3 STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Statement of Intent is included in appendix 1 of this report. In this document the council sets out the eligibility criteria for the ECO4 scheme

The ECO4 eligibility criteria which has been provided by OFGEM has been broken down into 4 routes with Route 2 requiring two proxies along with the required SAP rating as indicated in the table below.

Proxy is the term used by Ofgem to defining the qualifying criteria under Route 2 to be met along with the required SAP rating as indicated in the table below.

The Routes to eligibility are set out on the table below:

Route	Explanation
<b>Route 1: Household Income</b>	Households living in private tenure SAP band D, E, F or G homes and with a gross annual income less than £31,000. This cap applies irrespective of the property size, composition or region and is from all sources of income, including both non-means tested and means tested benefits.
<b>Route 2: Proxy Targeting</b>	<p>SAP bands E-G households that meet a combination of two of the following proxies:</p> <p><b>Proxy 1)</b> Homes in Scotland in “data zone” 1-3 on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Proxy 2)</b> Householders receiving a Council Tax rebate (rebates based on low income only, excludes single person rebates).</p> <p><b>Proxy 3)</b> Householders vulnerable to living in a cold home as identified in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance. Only one from the list can be used, excludes the proxy ‘low income’.</p> <p><b>Proxy 4)</b> A householder receiving free school meals due to low income.</p> <p><b>Proxy 5)</b> A householder supported by a LA run scheme, that has been named and described by the LA as supporting low income and vulnerable households for the purposes of NICE Guideline.</p> <p><b>Proxy 6)</b> A household referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier or Citizen's Advice or Citizen's Advice Scotland, because they have been identified as struggling to pay their electricity and gas bills.</p>

<sup>1</sup> [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/)

	<p><b>Proxy 7)</b> Households identified through supplier debt data. This route enables obligated suppliers to use their own debt data to identify either Non-Pre-Payment meter households (non-PPM), or Pre-Payment meter households (PPM).</p> <p><b>Non-PPM customers:</b> These are customers who have been in debt for more than 13 weeks ending with the day on which the declaration is made, and are in a debt repayment plan with their energy supplier or repaying their fuel debt through 3rd party deductions.</p> <p><b>PPM customers:</b> Suppliers may also identify PPM households who: have either self-disconnected or received supplier Discretionary/Friendly credit within the last 13 weeks ending with the day on which the declaration is made; or are in a debt repayment plan with their energy supplier; or repaying their fuel debt through 3rd party deductions.</p> <p><b>* Note: proxies 1 &amp; 3 and proxies 6 &amp; 7 cannot be used in combination with each.</b></p>
<b>Route 3: NHS Referral</b>	<p>SAP bands D-G households that have been identified by their doctor or GP as low-income and vulnerable, with an occupant whose health conditions may be impacted further by living in a cold home. These health conditions may be cardiovascular, respiratory, immunosuppressed, or limited mobility related.</p> <p>This is because the Council has identified a positive correlation between households who suffer from long-term health conditions and living off a low-income, with living in poorly insulated homes.</p>
<b>Route 4: Bespoke Targeting</b>	<p>SAP band D-G owner-occupied households and private rented sector E-G households that are referred under Route 4: Bespoke Targeting.</p> <p>Suppliers and LAs can submit an application to BEIS where they have identified a low income and vulnerable household, who are not already eligible under the exiting routes.</p>

## **E CONCLUSION**

The council continues to support and successfully deliver projects and measures to reduce levels of fuel poverty through improved energy efficiency for private households. The publishing of an updated Statement of Intent based on the new ECO4 criteria will allow the council to continue to do this by better targeting the available funds at those in the most need.

## **F BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Council Executive October 2018 Energy Company Obligations (ECO) Scheme Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent



Services for the Community PDSP September 2018 – Energy Company Obligation  
(ECO) Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Appendices/Attachments: One

Contact Person: Robert Smith, Housing Investment Manager 01506 28386,  
[robert.smith@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:robert.smith@westlothian.gov.uk)

**Julie Whitelaw**  
**Interim Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services**  
**28 March 2023**

**APPENDIX 1****ENERGY COMPANY OBLIGATION – FLEXIBILITY ELIGIBILITY****STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Local Authority	West Lothian
Date of Publication	23/04/2023
Publication on Website	23/04/2023
Version	S12000040/00002

This statement sets out West Lothian Council's flexible eligibility criteria for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) scheme from April 2023 – March 2026.

The ECO4 scheme will focus on supporting low income and vulnerable households. The scheme will improve the least energy efficient homes helping to meet the Government's fuel poverty and net zero commitments.

The flexible approach for Local Authorities (LAs) to identifying fuel poor and vulnerable households who may benefit from heating and energy saving measures is referred to as "ECO4 Flex".

**1. Introduction**

**1.1.** West Lothian Council is committed to tackling Fuel Poverty across the region through various means, as detailed in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and Anti-Poverty Strategy. Adopting the Flexible ECO Eligibility Policy will allow ECO support for energy efficiency improvement measures to be made available to more residents living in private sector housing. This Statement of Intent will help to target those households in the highest level of need by targeting households living in fuel poverty or who are living on a low income and are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home. Flexible ECO is only available to support residents living in private sector housing.

**1.2.** A household is described as living in fuel poverty, in Scotland, if in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime; it would be required to spend more than 10% of its income on all household fuel use. If over 20% of income is required, then this is termed as being in extreme fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty for ECO4 will however be measured using the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) indicator. Under this indicator a household is considered to be fuel poor if:

- They are living in a property with a fuel poverty energy efficiency rating of band D or below **and**;
- When they spend the required amount to heat their home, they are left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

There are therefore three important elements in determining whether a household is fuel poor under this indicator:

- Household income
- Household energy requirements
- Fuel prices

**1.3.** This statement is not a guarantee that households will access ECO-Flex since this decision rests with the ECO provider(s). In addition to the discretion of the ECO providers all installations will be subject to appropriate surveys by the ECO providers or their agents to confirm that;

- Properties are suitable for specified measures
- Proposed measures fit within the ECO4 scheme regulations
- ECO providers have funding available

**1.4.** The level of funding made available by the ECO providers varies and there is no guaranteed minimum funding level. Ultimately West Lothian Council may only facilitate and support households. The final agreement and contract is between the house owner and the ECO provider or their agents.

## **2. West Lothian Council Area**

**2.1.** West Lothian Council was established in 1996 and serves a community of over 175,000 citizens in Central Scotland, which is 3.2% of the Scottish population. There are almost 76,000 homes in West Lothian of which about 13,250 are owned by West Lothian Council; of these 76,000 homes there are approximately 14,000 (18%) households in fuel poverty across West Lothian and of those 7,000 (9%) are in extreme fuel poverty.

The Council welcomes the introduction of the ECO4 Flex eligibility routes as it helps the Council achieve its plans to improve the homes of those in fuel poverty or vulnerable to the cold.

## **3. ECO4 Flex Referral Routes**

**3.1.** The Council is publishing this Statement of Intent (Sol), on the **23/04/2023** to confirm that each of the households declared will adhere to at least one of the four available routes outlined below:

### **Route 1:**

Households living in private tenure SAP band D, E, F or G homes and with a gross annual income less than £31,000. This cap applies irrespective of the property size, composition or region and is from all sources of income, including both non-means tested and means tested benefits.

**Route 2:** SAP bands E-G households that meet a combination of two of the following proxies:

<b>Proxy 1)</b> Homes in Scotland in “data zone” 1-3 on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Proxy 2)</b> Householders receiving a Council Tax rebate (rebates based on low income only, excludes single person rebates).
<b>Proxy 3)</b> Householders vulnerable to living in a cold home as identified in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance. Only one from the list can be used, excludes the proxy ‘low income’.
<b>Proxy 4)</b> A householder receiving free school meals due to low-income.
<b>Proxy 5)</b> A householder supported by a LA run scheme, that has been named and described by the LA as supporting low income and vulnerable households for the purposes of NICE Guideline.
<b>Proxy 6)</b> A household referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier or Citizen's Advice or Citizen's Advice Scotland, because they have been identified as struggling to pay their electricity and gas bills.
<b>Proxy 7)</b> Households identified through supplier debt data. This route enables obligated suppliers to use their own debt data to identify either Non Pre-Payment meter households (non-PPM), or Pre-Payment meter households (PPM)
<p>a) Non-PPM customers: These are customers who have been in debt for more than 13 weeks ending with the day on which the declaration is made, and are in a debt repayment plan with their energy supplier or repaying their fuel debt through 3rd party deductions.</p> <p>b) PPM customers: Suppliers may also identify PPM households who: • have either self-disconnected or received supplier Discretionary/Friendly credit within the last 13 weeks ending with the day on which the declaration is made; or • are in a debt repayment plan with their energy supplier; or • repaying their fuel debt through 3rd party deductions.</p>

\* Note: proxies 1 & 3 and proxies 6 & 7 cannot be used in combination with each other.

**Route 3:** SAP bands D-G households that have been identified by their doctor or GP as low-income and vulnerable, with an occupant whose health conditions may be impacted further by living in a cold home. These health conditions may be cardiovascular, respiratory, immunosuppressed, or limited mobility related.

This is because the Council has identified a positive correlation between households who suffer from long-term health conditions and living off a low-income, with living in poorly insulated homes.

**Route 4:** SAP band D-G owner-occupied households and private rented sector E-G households that are referred under Route 4: Bespoke Targeting. Suppliers and LAs can submit an application to BEIS where they have identified a low income and vulnerable household, who are not already eligible under the exiting routes.

West Lothian Council will decide which routes it will apply and with which partners.

All four routes to ECO4 flex will require the necessary evidence to be provided to prove any claims. This evidence will be held by the Local authority to provide for any future audits.

#### **4. Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS) and ECO funding**

<sup>2</sup> [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020)

ECO 4 funding may not be blended with Scottish Government and other funding. ECO financing however may be leveraged in three main ways:

1. ECO funding alongside HEEPS: ABS for separate measures in the same properties
2. ECO finance replaces HEEPS: ABS or other public funding (whole property).
3. ECO finance as part of a separate local ECO Flex scheme running in parallel with HEEPS: ABS. ECO4 funding could therefore be used within the HEEPS: ABS scheme to fund the works on eligible houses allowing for more houses to receive the energy efficiency upgrades.

ECO finance is now primarily aimed at domestic owner occupiers and at properties with a SAP banding of D and below. There is a requirement to improve these properties to minimum requirement EPC ratings, with an EPC F and G properties expected to reach a band D, and band D and E properties to reach a minimum of a band C.

#### **4. Referrals**

**4.1.** Referrals for Flexible ECO funding will be accepted from both Home Energy Scotland (HES) and via the council's own advocacy service The West Lothian Advice Shop, Citizens Advice Bureau and a Healthcare provided such as General Practitioner or Health Board/ NHS Trust.

All Referrals for Flexible ECO funding must be evidenced with the documents outlined in the regulations.

West Lothian Council will sign declarations in relation to council-initiated area-based schemes such as the HEEPS: ABS programme which are carried out by recognised trademark contractors. In addition, declarations for ECO-Flex will be signed using route 2 proxy 7 to try to target the funding to those most in need.

**4.2.** The delivery of the HEEPS: ABS programme is managed by the council and all HEEPS: ABS enquiries are directed initially to the West Lothian Advice Shop, who maintain an active referral relationship with HES. Referrals for Flexible ECO funding will also be accepted from contractors appointed to deliver energy efficiency measures as part of the EES: ABS programme.

West Lothian Advice Shop Telephone: 01506 283000

West Lothian Advice Shop Website: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop>

Home Energy Scotland Telephone: 0800 808 2282

Home Energy Scotland Website: <https://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/home-energy-scotland>

The definition of who can make health referrals is contained within the ECO4 regulations.

**4.3.** All referral information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and retained for the purposes of evidence, monitoring and reporting.

#### **5. Evaluation, Evidence and Reporting**

**5.1.** To facilitate internal monitoring and reporting the council will be required to evidence records to support household eligibility and information received from suppliers or installers on measures installed.

The council will be required to forward information on to OFGEM providing the regulator with:

- The Local Authorities UPRN (Unique Reference Number).
- Whether the referral was made on behalf of another Local Authority.
- The ECOFlex referral routes used.
- The ECOFlex referral proxy's used.
- The date the household became eligible.
- The date of the Sol publication, and
- A link to the Sol.

**5.2.** The eligibility of the application must be evidenced by one of the following:

- **Route 1 Low Income:** Tax return from the last 3 months payslips from the last 3 months, bank statements from the last 3 months proving income payments.
- **Route 2 Proxy Targeting:** Screen shot confirming that the property is in a SMID area  
A signed letter from a Doctor / GP identifying that someone has a medical condition, such as heart disease; a disability that, for instance, stops people moving around to keep warm, or makes them more likely to develop chest infections, following NICE guidance.

Signed letter from local coordinator / local authority that proves the household was eligible for a LA-run scheme.

Eligibility Checking Service (ECS), documentation showing eligibility for free school meals due to low-income provided by the Department for Education or from the school. A signed letter accompanied by proof of gas and electricity debt from the energy supplier or Citizen's Advice, showing that the household has been referred to the LA for utility bill support or supplier provided Pre-payment meter data.

- **Route 3 NHS Referral:** Official letter signed by either an NHS Trust, NHS Trust Board or NHS Primary Care provider. This letter will need to state that the official signing the letter considers someone in the household to be suffering from one of the four health conditions listed
  - A cardiovascular condition,
  - A respiratory disease,
  - Limited mobility or,
  - Immunosuppression

## 6. Review

**6.1.** The scheme will be reviewed annually or at any point there is a significant change to the scheme or the funding available.

**6.2.** On the review of the scheme the council has the option to withdraw this statement where the scheme is no longer valid or provides no advantages to the communities of West Lothian.

## DECLARATION AND EVIDENCE CHECK CONFIRMATION

All potentially eligible households should apply through West Lothian Council or one of their approved ECO installers to ensure that they can either benefit from the scheme or be assessed for eligibility under any other relevant programme.

The officer below will be responsible for checking and verifying declarations and associated evidence submitted on behalf of the local authority:

**Name:** Gordon Dunsmuir

**Job Title:** Housing Investment Officer

**Telephone:** 01506280000

**Email:** [ecoflex@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:ecoflex@westlothian.gov.uk)

## CEO OR DEDICATED RESPONSIBLE PERSON MANDATORY SIGNATURE

The West Lothian Council will administer the scheme according to BEIS' ECO4 Order and will identify eligible households via Ofgem's application process. The CEO (or designated Chief Officer) of the Council will oversee the process of identifying eligible households under ECO4 Flex.

The eligibility information will be stored securely in line with the Council's data protection policy, Information Commissioner's Office Data Sharing Code, and BEIS guidance.

**Signature:** XXXXXX

**Name:** Julie Whitelaw

**Job Title:** Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

**Date of signature:** 23/04/2023

For any general enquires relating to this Statement of Intent, please contact:

[EcoFlex@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:EcoFlex@westlothian.gov.uk)





Data Label: Public

Item		Purpose		Responsible Officer	
2023					
Housing Services PDSP- 28/03/23 (AGENDA SETTING 14/03/23)					
1	Performance & Change	Q3 Performance Report		Kirsty Weir	
2	Housing Need	Q3 Turnover Report		Sarah Kelly	
3	Housing Strategy & Development	HEEPS:ABS Programme update and 2023/24 programme		Marjory Mackie	
4	Housing Strategy & Development	Update to Energey Company Obligation (ECO) Scheme Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent		Marjory Mackie	
Housing Services PDSP- 23/05/23 (AGENDA SETTING 09/05/23)					
1	Housing Need	Update on Sharing Spaces		Sarah Kelly	
2	Housing Need	Q4 Turnover Report		Sarah Kelly	
3	Housing Strategy & Development	Affordable Housing Delivery Programme Update		Marjory Mackie	
4	Performance & Change	CIH Scotland's Housing Festival 2023- A Review		Kirsty Weir	
5	Housing Strategy & Development	2023/24 to 2032/33 Housing Asset Management Plan		Marjory Mackie	
6	Housing Strategy & Development	Draft West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28		Marjory Mackie	