ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL



Housing Services
Annual Report 2025-2026

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Introduction



I am delighted to introduce the 'Annual Report' for tenants and service users for financial year 2025 to 2026.

The process of producing our 'Annual Return against the Charter' and publishing an annual report has become well established.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter was developed by the Scottish Government. It aims to help improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide. It will also support the Scottish Government's long-term aim of creating a safer and stronger Scotland. It will do so by:

- Stating clearly what tenants and other customers can expect from social landlords and helping them to hold landlords to account.
- Focusing the efforts of social landlords on achieving outcomes that matter to their customers.
- Establishing a basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator to assess and report on how well landlords are performing. This assessment will enable the Regulator, social landlords, tenants and other customers to identify areas of strong performance and areas needing improvement.

The Council is required to produce an Annual Assurance Statement which covers Housing Services' performance, and we must submit it to the Scottish Housing Regulator by October each year. This information must also be made available to tenants and service users on the Council's website.

The annual report for tenants has grown and developed over the last few years and will continue to do so over the coming years. In developing this report we've compared performance over the last three years and have highlighted trends.

Orkney Islands Council has shown strong performance in many areas – our properties are in good condition, we have a low number of repairs per property, we have delivered well against the energy efficiency standards we are required to meet, our current rent collection is high and our response to homelessness is good.

Last year we undertook a significant piece of work around housing need and strategy development. We have also really developed and analysed our business plan to ensure we are very clear on how many additional properties we can build, and the amount of money we need to invest in our existing stock. This year we have made progress with background work around preparing key sites for development in the coming years.

In respect of social rented housing, the Council faces significant challenges in relation to a high level of housing need but also in the form of restricted budgets. We will continue to develop social rented housing ourselves. In 2025/26 we purchased 19 properties – a combination of 'off the shelf' purchases and purchasing existing properties. We intend to build up to 150 properties over the next decade. We will also work with partners including

Orkney Housing Association and Places for People Scotland to ensure affordable housing continues to be developed.

Areas where performance could be improved include the time it takes to return empty properties to an appropriate standard so they can be re-let, recovery of rent arrears and opportunities to participate.

The reporting period covered by this report, is up to the end of March 2026. A period with a range of challenges for our staff, our contractors and our tenants. This included rising costs of supplies to undertake repairs and improvements and delays in deliveries. We have continued to increase our housing stock and have made significant progress in undertaking risk assessments around water safety (legionella) in Council homes. We have been very aware of financial challenges which continue to affect our tenants as a result of the ongoing cost of living crisis. Please remember that our staff are here to help support tenants through these difficult times and will be happy to provide advice and assistance as required.

For five years now the Service has published the annual report electronically only. This approach has reduced our use of paper and is more cost effective than physically printing and posting annual reports to all our tenants. We will continue to publish it annually through our website. Our website has assistive software. We recognise however, that not everyone has access to the internet and therefore if you would still like to receive a paper copy, we will make one available on request or if you need a copy in a different language or format.

Councillor Gwenda Shearer,

Chair of Education, Communities and Housing Committee.

YEAR AT A GLANCE

1,061
council homes owned.

19
homes acquired.

£2.1m
invested in homes.

93.88%
homes meet SHQS.

99.4%
electrical safety compliance.

85.2%
repair satisfaction.

99.07%
rent collected.

89
homes let.

54%
of lets to homeless households.

100%
Antisocial behaviour cases resolved on time.

77.3%
overall tenant satisfaction.

34
compliments received.

Annual Report

Performance figures for 2025-2026 are shown first with figures for 2024-2025 and 2023-2024 shown below to allow comparison. This information allows you, as a Council tenant, to see the work we are doing to improve housing services, and how we compare to some similar Scottish Councils. We have chosen both Highland and Shetland Islands Councils. Although Western Isles and Argyll and Bute Councils would be broadly comparable, both have transferred their housing stock to a Housing Association which represents a significant difference and therefore they have not been included.

We are required to carry out a wholescale tenants' satisfaction survey every three years. However, because the tenants in properties change over a period of time, we have taken the decision to undertake the tenants' satisfaction survey every two years instead. The section on Tenant Engagement is based on the survey which was undertaken between March and May 2026 and therefore we will undertake another one in the Spring of 2028.

Throughout this report we have used coloured icons for highlighting performance. This is as follows:

Good Progress	Good progress made; action plans continue to show how further improvement will be achieved.
Progress Needed	Evidence of progress and understanding of the issues but with more to do to achieve real impact.
Improvement Required	Poor performance where improvements could be made.

A web accessible version of this report is available from https://www.orkney.gov.uk/. In order to allow the web accessible version to be read with a reader, such as Recite Me, a full stop has been inserted after every figure to ensure a pause is inserted.

Your Home

Our Housing Stock

Good Progress

As of 31 March 2026, our Council owned 1,061 homes, which is an increase from the 1,041 homes we had the previous year. The Council began a programme of building additional social rented houses in 2009/10, and by 31 March 2026 we had successfully completed 279 new homes. In 2025/26 we also purchased 15 ‘off the shelf properties’ i.e. properties developed by another developer and bought 4 existing properties, giving a total of 305 properties and marking a significant 39% boost to our housing stock.

In the 2025/26 financial year, the total rent payable to us by our tenants for the year amounted to £4,875,684. To ensure our housing remains affordable, we increased our weekly rent by just 4% on average from the previous year. We are committed to continuing to build new houses and working in partnership with key partners including Orkney Housing Association and Places for People Scotland to address housing need. Having reviewed our financial business plan and, providing sufficient Scottish Government grant is available, we aim to build up to 150 houses over the next decade.

Size of Home.	Number Owned.		
	March 2026.	March 2025.	March 2024.
Bedsit.	28.	28.	28.
1 Bedroom.	403.	395.	384.
2 Bedrooms.	337.	332.	325.
3 Bedrooms.	252.	258.	246.
4 Bedrooms and larger.	24.	20.	20.

When we see our property count drop, it's typically because we've sold a few that we no longer need. While the Right to Buy scheme ended on 1 August 2016, we may choose to sell a property. This may be because we have too many properties in an area with decreasing demand. Alternatively, we may sell a property if it needs a significant upgrade to meet standards and is vacant. There are also times when we acquire properties. We do this to strengthen our housing stock when there's a shortage in a specific area or for certain housing types. Our goal is to keep our housing options responsive to our community's needs.

Quality of Housing

Good Progress

93.88%
of homes meet the SHQS.

96.13%
of homes meet the EESSH.

71%
of tenants' content with the overall quality of homes.

The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) is a challenging standard which ensures a property is in a good standard of repair, meets challenging energy efficiency standards, is provided with modern facilities and services and is healthy, safe and secure. The Council was required to meet this standard by March 2015 and continue to do so thereafter.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Percentage of stock meeting the SHQS.	2025-2026.	**93.88%.**	91.13%.	61.65%.	89.46%.
	2024-2025.	**93.85%.**	86.55%.	58.58%.	87.24%.
	2023-2024.	**80.38%.**	72.22%.	44.60%.	84.36%.
Percentage of stock regarded as exempt, in abeyance or fail.	2025-2026.	**6.12%.**	8.87%.	38.35%.	10.54%.
	2024-2025.	**6.15%.**	13.45%.	41.42%.	13.00%.
	2023-2024.	**19.62%.**	27.78%.	55.40%.	15.64%.

We've been making a series of improvements, including the installation of new kitchens, bathrooms, and windows. These upgrades not only align with required standards but also with the preferences of our tenants. We're also actively working on installing new heating systems and enhancing insulation to boost energy efficiency and meet the necessary standards.

In 2025/26, the percentage of properties meeting the SHQS remained similar with 93.88% of our properties now meeting compliance, compared to 93.85% in the previous year. This improvement highlights our commitment to addressing previous challenges, including issues identified with our electrical installation condition reports (EICR). Thanks to a focused improvement plan, 99.4% of our properties now hold valid EICR certificates. For the remaining properties, other issues have temporarily prevented us from completing this work. Additionally, we've successfully installed interlinked smoke alarms in 99.6% of our properties. We're continuing to collaborate with our tenants to gain access to the remaining few, and we extend our thanks to them and our contractors for their support.

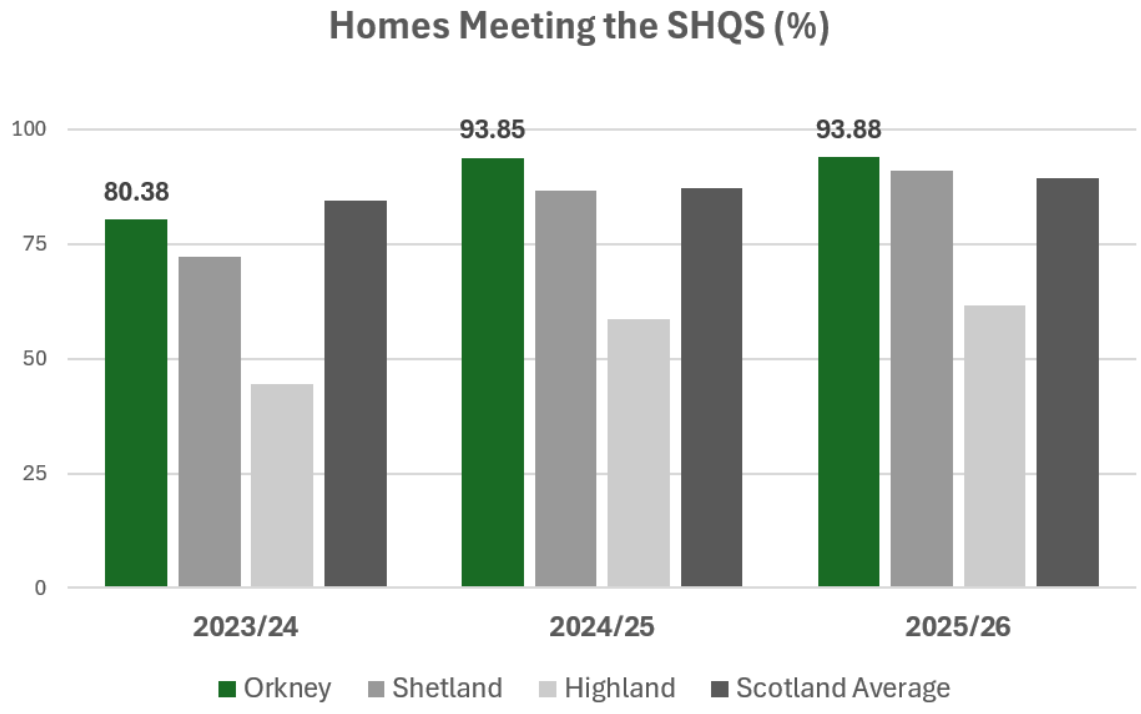
A property may be classified as being in abeyance when work cannot be done for 'social' reasons relating to tenants' or owner-occupiers' behaviour. For example, where the tenant

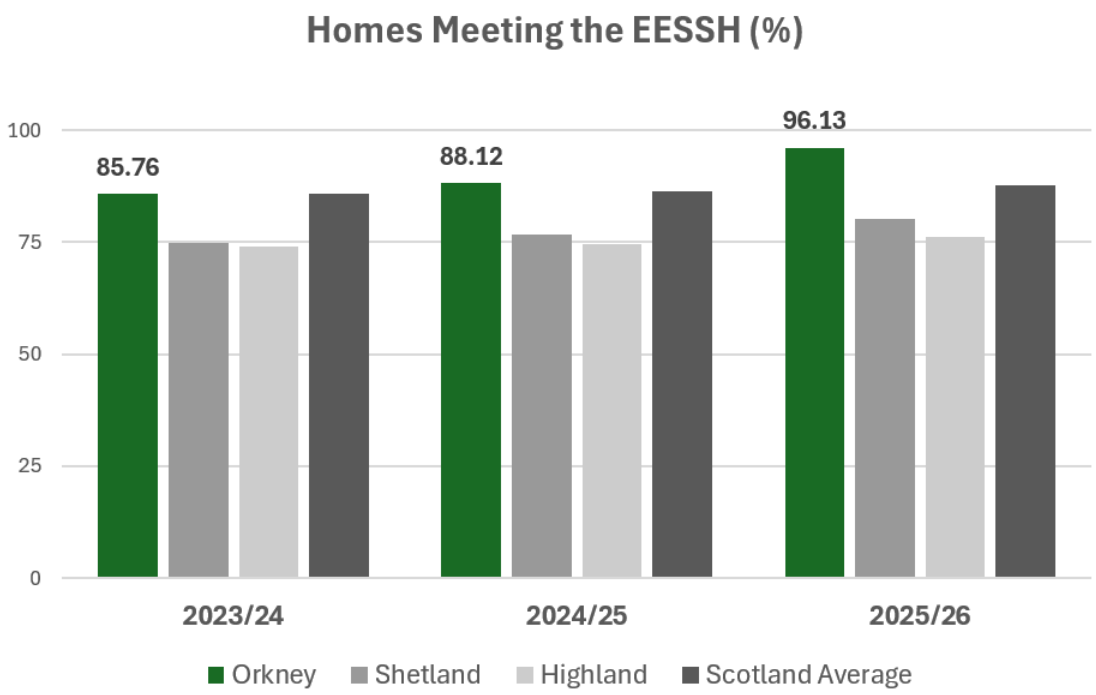
is elderly or suffering from a medical condition such that they do not wish work to be undertaken on their home at this time. The number of abeyances decreased from 12 in 2024/25 to 11 in 2025/26.

A property may be classified as being exempt when work cannot be done for technical reasons such as wall cavities being too narrow to fill with insulation, unreasonably high costs relative to the benefit of the property or legal/consent restrictions such as conservation restrictions in listed buildings, etc. The number of exemptions increased from 5 in 2024/25 to 8 in 2025/26. Regarding the SHQS, there were 46 properties that did not meet the standard in 2024/25, and this number decreased to 45 in 2025/26.

In addition, social landlords were required to meet a challenging energy efficiency standard by December 2020, known as the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH). We've performed well in meeting this standard and are in a favourable national position. Looking ahead, a more demanding energy efficiency standard is expected by 2032, with the Scottish Government currently revising its guidance. These standards work in conjunction with the SHQS to ensure the quality of our housing remains high.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Properties meeting EESSH.	2025-2026.	**96.13%.**	80.10%.	76.30%.	87.56%.
	2024-2025.	**88.12%.**	76.80%.	74.60%.	86.45%.
	2023-2024.	**85.76%.**	74.79%.	73.92%.	85.76%.





The year 2021/22 marked the final instance in which we reported the SHQS and EESSH separately, in line with national guidance. We are committed to enhancing the quality of our housing stock through our housing investment programme. In financial year 2025/26, we allocated a total of £2.10 million for repairs and maintenance. This investment ensures that our tenants' homes, at the very least, continue to meet the SHQS and EESSH, and we are steadily addressing properties in abeyance to bring them up to the required standards as issues allow. We expect a challenging new energy efficiency standard by December 2032 (pending any adjustments following the Scottish Government's review).

Our tenants have shared their thoughts, and the feedback is positive:

71% of tenants were content with the overall quality of their homes.

We have made progress towards meeting the EESSH and will continue to do so over the coming year. We will continue to develop our plans for meeting an enhanced energy efficiency standard by the expected deadline of 2032 but are waiting for the Scottish Government’s guidance.

Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement

Progress Needed

7.24 hours
Average time to complete emergency repairs.

14.60 days
Average working days for non-emergency repairs.

85.23%
of tenants satisfied with the repair.

The area of repairs is one where context is particularly relevant, with some Councils setting very challenging timescales for completion well ahead of the legislative requirement. Orkney's geography does present some challenges in that respect.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Average number of hours to complete emergency repairs.	2025-2026.	**7.24.**	2.20.	4.67.	3.45.
	2024-2025.	**9.72.**	2.20.	3.54.	3.47.
	2023-2024.	**8.98.**	2.30.	4.13.	3.96.
Number of emergency repairs per house.	2025-2026.	**0.39.**	0.15.	0.92.	0.97.
	2024-2025.	**0.37.**	0.17.	0.97.	0.98.
	2023-2024.	**0.38.**	0.23.	0.81.	0.97.
Average working days to complete non-emergency repairs.	2025-2026	**14.60.**	7.90.	7.97.	8.58.
	2024-2025.	**15.62.**	8.40.	7.65.	9.13.
	2023-2024.	**17.23.**	10.30.	9.16.	8.97.
Number of non-emergency repairs per house.	2025-2026.	**1.79.**	1.91.	1.40.	2.31.
	2024-2025.	**1.64.**	2.17.	1.34.	2.25.
	2023-2024.	**1.59.**	2.23.	1.30.	2.26.

The Council's ability to keep repairs per house at a minimum is a sign of our effective performance. This is largely due to our ongoing investment in maintaining our housing stock, ensuring it's in good condition, and resulting in fewer necessary repairs.

There has been a decrease in the time taken to deliver emergency repairs from 9.72 hours in 2024/25 to 7.24 hours in 2025/26.

The requirements for contractors recording emergency repairs are complex. We undertake an analysis of repairs which are outwith the timescales and work with our contractors to seek to improve this. We will seek to reduce this timescale.

The time taken to deliver non-emergency repairs has improved from last year. The Council continues to work closely with contractors and aims to improve its performance wherever possible.

Issues which have arisen include some of those which have affected housing providers nationally, including difficulties with the supply of some parts and challenges with recruiting enough staff in certain trades.

When we asked tenants, during 2025/26 about their experience of repairs undertaken, 85.23% were satisfied with the repair and 5.37% were dissatisfied with the time to undertake the work. This compares with 2024/25 when 85.94% were satisfied with the repair and 5.72% were dissatisfied with the time to undertake the work.

Repairs Satisfaction

85.94%
Satisfaction in 2024/25.

85.23%
Satisfaction in 2025/26.

5.72%
Dissatisfaction in 2024/25.

5.37%
Dissatisfaction in 2025/26.

YOUR HOME OVERVIEW

1,061
Council homes owned

19
Homes acquired in 2025/26.

93.88%
Homes meeting SHQS.

96.13%
Homes meeting EESSH.

99.4%
Electrical safety compliance.

71%
Of tenants satisfied with overall quality of homes.

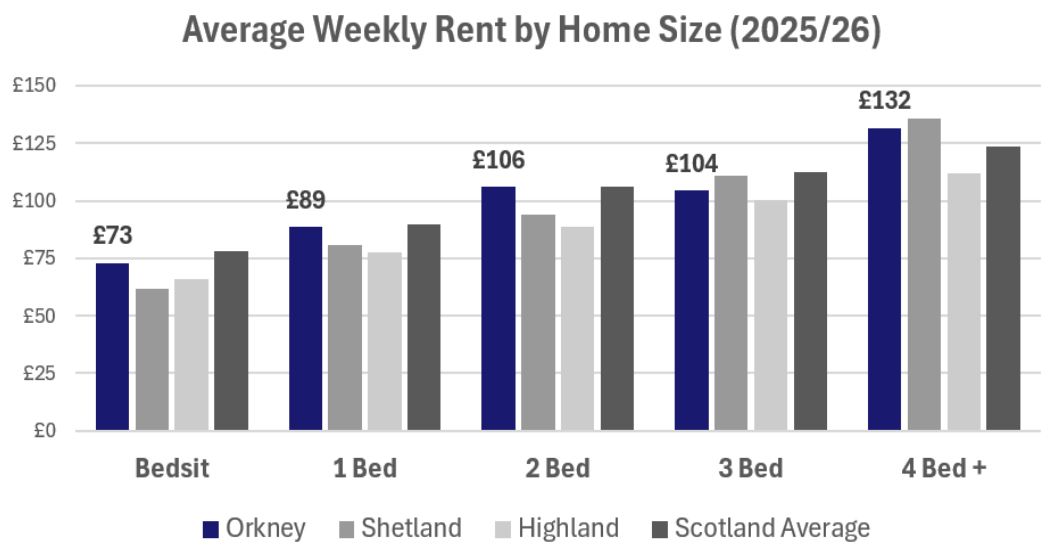
Value for Money

Average Rents

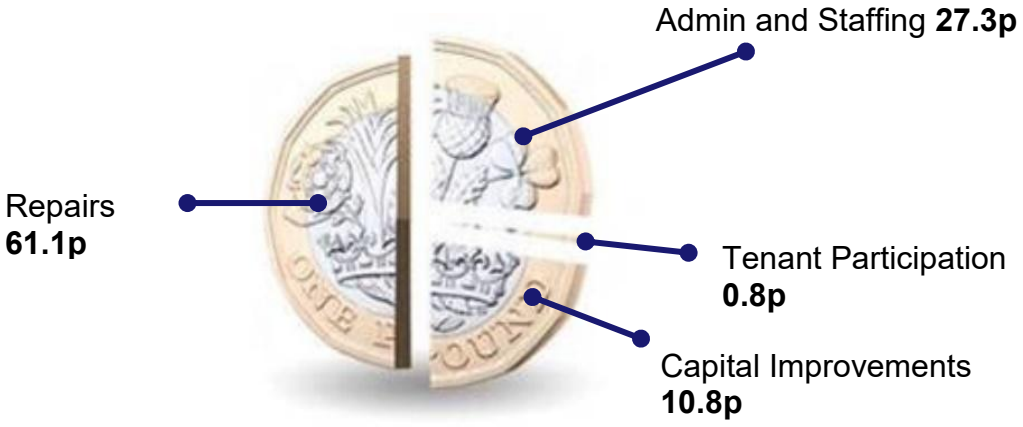
Progress Needed

Orkney is Scotland's smallest Local Authority Housing Service and as such economies of scale are a factor in the rental charges. However, Orkney Islands Council's rental charges are broadly comparable to other similar areas.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Bedsit.	2025-2026.	**£73.02.**	£61.80.	£65.82.	£78.11.
	2024-2025.	**£70.14.**	£58.11.	£79.93.	£87.12.
	2023-2024.	**£65.74.**	£55.36.	£74.15.	£82.24.
1 Bedroom.	2025-2026.	**£88.59.**	£80.87.	£77.77.	£89.93.
	2024-2025.	**£85.39.**	£76.09.	£82.37.	£93.27.
	2023-2024.	**£79.61.**	£72.50.	£76.27.	£87.87.
2 Bedroom.	2025-2026.	**£105.97.**	£93.73.	£88.41.	£105.90.
	2024-2025.	**£101.90.**	£87.58.	£91.83.	£96.00.
	2023-2024.	**£84.76.**	£83.51.	£84.86.	£90.29.
3 Bedroom.	2025-2026.	**£104.41.**	£110.68.	£100.29.	£112.67.
	2024-2025.	**£100.52.**	£103.11.	£102.24.	£104.51.
	2023-2024.	**£93.27.**	£98.52.	£94.43.	£98.30.
4 Bedroom plus.	2025-2026.	**£131.58.**	£135.49.	£111.73.	£123.28.
	2024-2025.	**£122.89.**	£126.42.	£114.16.	£115.58.
	2023-2024.	**£115.89.**	£120.32.	£105.65.	£108.27.



The cost of providing and maintaining Council housing is funded by our tenants' rents. The chart below shows how every £1 in rent you pay is spent.



The percentage of our tenants who feel their rent represents good value for money stayed steady at 64%, compared with the Scottish average of 81.45% for financial year 2025/26.

Rent collection is very important to the Council. We are committed to being efficient and have processes in place to help us collect as much rent as possible. Performance in 2025/26 remained broadly stable.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Rent collected as a percentage of the total rent due in the reporting year.	2025-2026.	**99.07%.**	100.73%.	99.50%.	99.66%.
	2024-2025.	**98.84%.**	100.81%.	99.82%.	100.19%.
	2023-2024.	**102.47%.**	100.04%.	99.04%.	99.40%.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Percentage gross rent arrears of rent due.	2025-2026.	**12.12%.**	8.66%.	5.84%.	6.04%.
	2024-2025.	**9.43%.**	8.48%.	6.42%.	6.17%.
	2023-2024.	**12.58%.**	10.97%.	7.16%.	6.74%.
Percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty during the last year.	2025-2026.	**1.65%.**	1.82%.	0.65%.	1.14%.
	2024-2025.	**1.47%.**	2.29%.	0.89%.	1.28%.
	2023-2024.	**1.49%.**	1.84%.	0.87%.	1.39%.

The Council places great emphasis on rent collection and remains committed to improving its efficiency. We have put in place processes to collect as much rent as possible. Our performance in the 2025/26 period saw a slight increase compared to the previous year, for current rent collection.

During the 2025/26 period, rent arrears continued to pose challenges. The cost of living crisis has posed some challenges. As of 31 March 2026, gross rent arrears increased by 2.69%. These arrears include both current arrears and those from tenants who left our properties while still owing money (former tenant arrears). We worked in partnership with Orkney Citizen's Advice Bureau so tenants who are having difficulty in making payment, are referred for assistance at an early stage. We have also been working on improving our internal processes and providing support to tenants facing financial difficulties. It is important to highlight that we are making every effort to recover outstanding arrears, including those from former tenants. This is important as arrears impact on the rent charged for everyone. We are committed to ensuring rents remain affordable for all our tenants.

Despite the ongoing challenges, it's worth noting that the overall rent collected has remained relatively stable at 99.07% for the year 2025/26, compared to 98.84% collected in 2024/25. We remain committed to managing our rent arrears and ensuring that we collect as much rent as possible.

VALUE FOR MONEY OVERVIEW

99.07%
Rent collected.

£4.88m
Rental income.

64%
Of tenants feel rent is good value.

£2.1m
Invested in homes.

1.65%
Rent lost through empty properties.

12.12%
Gross arrears.

Your Tenancy

Access to Social Housing

Good Progress

89
Homes let in 2025/26.

53.93%
of lets went to homeless households.

40.45%
of lets went to waiting list applicants.

	Reporting Year.	Homeless Households.	Waiting List Applicants.	Transfer Applicants.	Other.
Orkney Islands Council.	2025-2026.	**53.93%.**	**40.45%.**	**5.62%**	**0.00%.**
	2024-2025.	**50.55%.**	**38.46%.**	**10.99%.**	**0.00%.**
	2023-2024.	**64.56%.**	**32.91%.**	**2.53%.**	**0.00%.**
Scotland Average.	2025-2026.	45.93%.	31.17%.	18.71%.	2.07%.
	2024-2025.	46.07%.	31.26%.	18.72%.	2.34%.
	2023-2024.	44.20%.	33.12%.	17.57%.	5.11%.

There has been a slight increase in the number of properties let to homeless households from 50.55% in 2024/25 to 53.93% in 2025/26. There has also been an increase in the number of lets to waiting list applicants. There was a drop in the number of lets to transfer applicants.

Sometimes, households may decline an offer of accommodation. This can happen if their circumstances change, and they no longer wish to live in a specific area. The percentage of tenancy offers refused in 2025/26 was 18.97%, this was a slight increase from 17.65% in 2024/25.

We are actively monitoring the reasons for refusals to find ways to reduce them. We had initially planned to introduce a new lettings policy that would make choice central to our allocations process by 1 April 2021. However, this has been delayed and is now scheduled for early 2027. This change should help reduce the number of refusals and speed up re-letting properties.

In 2025/26, we successfully let 89 homes in total - 69 re-lets of existing properties, 15 off the shelf purchases and 5 acquisitions of existing properties.

Tenancy Sustainment

Good Progress

We also carefully track how many tenancies last for more than a year, although this can be influenced by a household's personal choices. Overall, our performance in tenancy sustainment increased from 2024/25.

Various reasons can contribute to tenancies not being sustained for longer than a year. These include situations where tenants go into the hospital, pass away, move out of Orkney, or seek housing in another sector, such as purchasing a property.

To provide extra assistance for households that may require support in managing their tenancies, we maintain a small housing support service. This service aims to help households who may benefit from additional guidance to ensure the success of their tenancies.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Number of lettable self-contained houses that became vacant in year.	2025-2026.	**73.**	121.	1,134.	41,185.
	2024-2025.	**72.**	108.	1,086.	41,130.
	2023-2024.	**79.**	113.	1,180.	44,501.
Percentage becoming vacant in year.	2025-2026.	**7.65%.**	7.72%.	7.62%.	6.88%.
	2024-2025.	**7.72%.**	6.84%.	7.38%.	7.18%.
	2023-2024.	**8.70%.**	7.17%.	8.10%.	7.18%.
Average number of days to re-let property.	2025-2026.	**77.68.**	71.61.	43.96.	51.93.
	2024-2025.	**60.65.**	96.11.	53.95.	60.22.
	2023-2024.	**71.43.**	73.79.	38.68.	56.79.

The percentage of self-contained properties becoming vacant during the year saw a slight decrease in 2025/26, to 7.65% from 7.72% in 2024/25 and 8.70% in 2023/24. This figure varies from one year to another.

There has been an increase in the number of days taken to re-let properties, there were several complex voids, these include properties which require substantial works before they can be made ready for re-let, that will have contributed to this rise.

Homelessness

Progress Needed

161
Homeless presentations in 2025/26.

338
Average days in temporary accommodation.

48
Permanent lets to homeless applicants.

We are committed to ensuring that homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice and are offered good quality temporary accommodation where this is needed. In addition, we are committed to continuing to offer support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

We work in partnership with Orkney Housing Association by offering permanent accommodation to homeless households through a process called Section 5 referrals. The table below shows the number of homeless households permanently housed in this way.

During 2025/26, there were 161 homeless presentations. For the same period, the Council had a statutory obligation to secure permanent accommodation for 108 households by 31 March 2026. Of these, 26.85% (equivalent to 29 households) were referred to Orkney Housing Association Ltd for permanent rehousing.

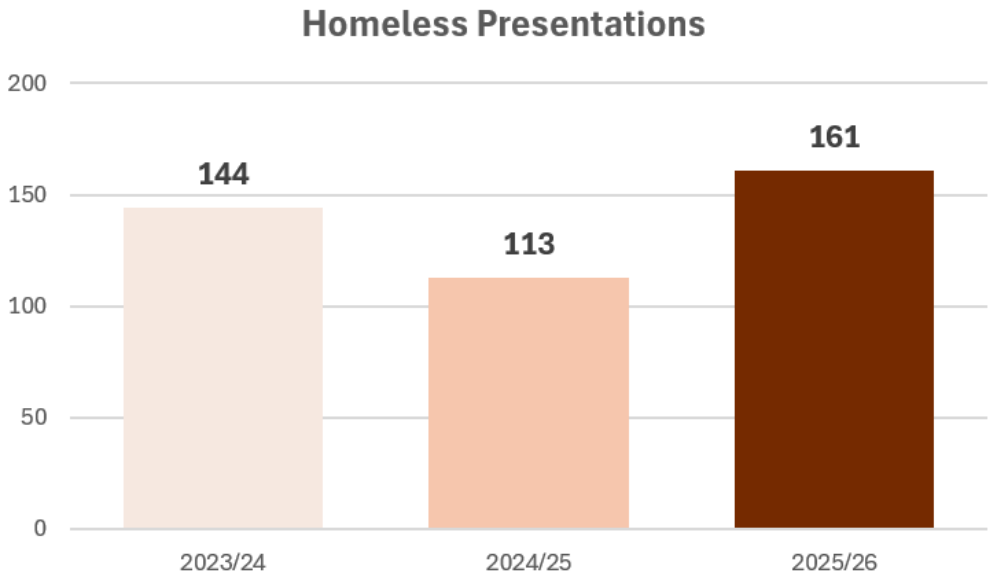
	2025-2026.	2024-2025.	2023-2024.
Percentage of homeless households referred to Registered Social Landlords.	26.85%	13.19%.	18.81%.
Number of households permanently rehoused by OHAL.	29.	12.	19.

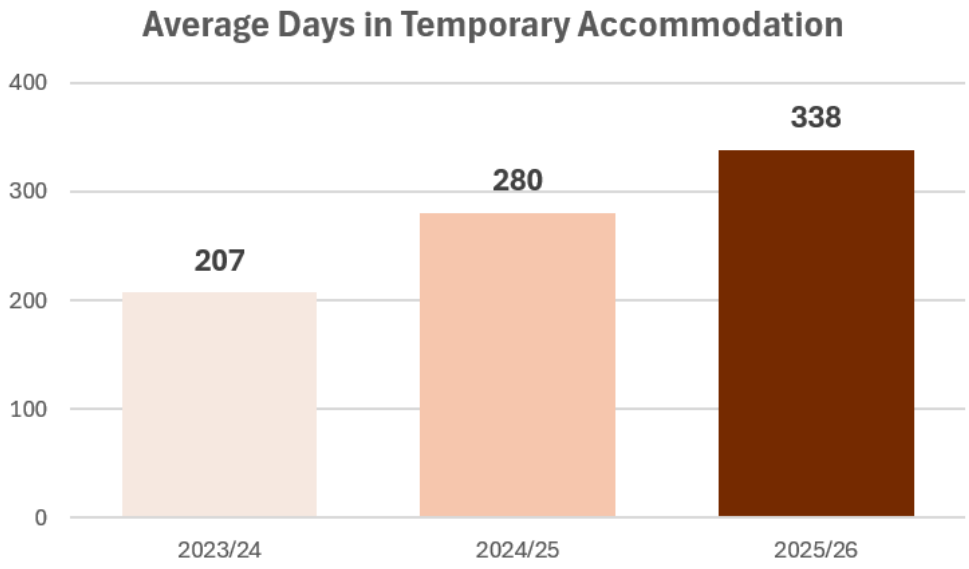
Since the financial year 2019/20, we have only needed to report a very modest amount of information in the Annual Return against the Charter regarding homelessness. However, we continue to use additional indicators because we believe they offer valuable information for our tenants and service users.

In 2025/26, the number of homelessness presentations increased. It's important to note that this is something beyond the Council's control. The time it takes between a homelessness presentation and the household being permanently rehoused, increased from 40 weeks to 49.7 weeks. It has remained challenging in respect of having suitable permanent accommodation of the right size and within the right area. During this period, a total of 37 cases waited over a year to be permanently rehoused.

	2025-2026.	2024-2025.	2023-2024.
Number of homeless presentations.	161.	113.	144.
Average length of time (days) in temporary accommodation.	338.	280.	207.
Number in temporary accommodation at financial year end.	85.*	74.*	75.*

* This information relates to the position on one day of the year being 31 March. In addition, it does not include households who have chosen to stay temporarily with family and friends.





	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Number of permanent lets to homeless applicants.	2025-2026.	**48.**	27.	664.	*
	2024-2025.	**46.**	36.	584.	*
	2023-2024.	**51.**	28.	607.	*

* Comparator information not available due to changes in reporting requirements.

YOUR TENANCY OVERVIEW

89
Homes let.

73
Properties became vacant.

54%
Lets to homeless households.

40%
Lets to waiting list applicants.

7.65%
Stock turnover.

77.68 days
Average re-let time

Your Neighbourhood

Our Housing Stock

Progress Needed

We are committed to maintaining the appeal and safety of our schemes and residential streets, making them pleasant places to live.

Orkney has a low level of anti-social behaviour, with few cases of serious anti-social behaviour. The relatively low-level anti-social behaviour in Orkney includes concerns like noisy parties, issues related to pets, parking, and shared areas. The number of complaints raised can vary from year to year. However, our performance in resolving these issues is notably strong. In the year 2025/26, there were a total of 9 cases, and all were successfully resolved within the designated timeframe.

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Percentage of reported anti-social behaviour cases resolved within locally agreed targets.	2025-2026.	**100.00%.**	100.00%.	77.43%.	99.01%.
	2024-2025.	**100.00%.**	50.00%.	86.98%.	93.37%.
	2023-2024.	**100.00%.**	100.00%.	86.43%.	94.28%.
Percentage satisfied with management of the neighbourhood they live in.	2025-2026.	**67.92%.**	75.48%.	74.31%.	84.64%.
	2024-2025.	**59.04%.**	81.50%.	74.31%.	84.67%.
	2023-2024.	**66.86%.**	83.36%.	88.01%.	85.09%.

The feedback relating to the management of the neighbourhood has improved, going from 59.04% in 2024/25 to 67.92% in 2025/26. Previously we have undertaken some consultation with the Residents Panel around this area and found that this related to grounds maintenance in Council schemes but also included footpaths and playparks not within the Housing Service's remit. There were also concerns raised around abandoned cars in car parks within schemes. This is something that should be reported to the Housing Service directly.

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW

100%
Antisocial behaviour cases resolved on time.

67.92%
Satisfied with neighbourhood management.

Tenant Engagement

Good Progress

The Council has a duty to develop and support tenant participation. During the financial year of 2025/26, our Tenant Participation Officer worked to actively encourage engagement and make general improvements to the way in which we approach tenant participation.

Tenants have the right to be consulted on matters affecting them. Feedback from our tenants and service users helps us to shape policy, implement improvements and make decisions with tenants' views in mind. The Council provides various opportunities for tenants to actively engage in decisions that affect them. This ranges from either paper based or online surveys, to face to face meetings and discussions with our various Panels. Tenants are actively encouraged to form Residents' Associations, join the Residents' Panel, or join our Armchair Panel.

Ways to get involved



Residents' Associations



Residents' Panel



Armchair Panel

We regularly conduct surveys to seek our tenant's views. The rental increase survey has been carried out every three years, with new tenants being consulted annually. Surveys give us a good insight into the views of our tenants which are taken into account when decisions or improvements are made.

The most recent Customer Satisfaction Survey results showed a decrease in satisfaction regarding the opportunities for tenants to participate in their landlord's decision-making processes. Satisfaction in this area decreased from 71% in 2024 to 62% in 2026. Changes to our Tenant Participation Strategy were made in 2025 as a result of a consultation on our Strategy. We are keen to encourage tenants to get involved.

In late 2025, the Residents' Panel met to consider the Annual Assurance Statement. They were consulted on several key areas relating to the Housing Service's performance. The Panel was also asked for feedback on their experience of the repairs service. The Panel's feedback is given due consideration and has a direct influence on any changes or improvements that we make to these areas of the service. Members of the Armchair Panel and Residents' Groups are invited to attend digital meetings with the Northern Tenant Partnership where landlords and tenants from Northern Scotland meet to discuss and share ideas relating to housing. Our Tenant Participation Officer regularly meets with tenants at Sheltered Housing to strengthen communication between tenants and staff at the Housing Service. As well as meetings, we also host a range of 'one-off' events. This year, we hosted a number of 'Tenant Participation Pop-up Events' in Kirkwall and Stromness, to promote and encourage tenant engagement.

2 Registered Residents' Associations

Grieveship Residents' Association and Flotta Burnside Residents' Association.

Residents' Associations are formed by local community members who work together to maintain and improve their local area. They may also be consulted on matters that might affect their local area. Associations that are registered may be eligible for funding that can be used towards local projects and running their Group, this includes the annual grant award from Housing Services. Our Tenant Participation Officer engages with both groups, and it is evident that they are having a positive impact within their local community.

We are also keen to increase accessible opportunities, to help tenants to engage using their preferred methods. The Armchair Panel gives tenants the opportunity to take part in consultation opportunities from the comfort of their own homes. Tenant participation is an area which is adapting and has changed in recent years, with more opportunities available to engage via electronic means. In 2025, our Tenant Participation Officer worked with the Learning Link to provide a device and internet access to tenants who were digitally excluded. This allowed them to access the internet and engage in online methods of tenant participation. Further, we now conduct an annual survey seeking tenant's preferences around the Newsletter. This lets tenants choose their preferred method of receiving the newsletter - online or via post.

We are required to ensure information is provided to our tenants. This is reflected as a key priority in our Tenant Participation Strategy. Our main methods of information provision include the Housing Newsletter (which is published three times per year), the Council's website, along with updates posted to our social media pages. Work was done this year to improve the Tenant Participation section of the Council's website. Housing Services shares information regularly on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

Follow us on social media

We share updates, news and opportunities to get involved.

Find us on Facebook at:
https://www.facebook.com/OIChousingservices/

Find us on Instagram at:
https://www.instagram.com/oichousingservices/

Examples of information we share

- Housing Newsletter (three times per year)
- Updates about your home and neighbourhood.
- Changes to services and policies.
- Advice on water safety and other important maintenance.
- Opportunities to take part and have your say.

If you are interested in finding out more about tenant participation or have a query about the Residents Panel, Armchair Panel or Residents' Associations, then please contact our Tenant Participation Officer:

☎ **Telephone:** 01856 873535.

✉ **Email:** claire.pritchard@orkney.gov.uk.

Satisfaction

Progress Needed

77.27%
of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided.

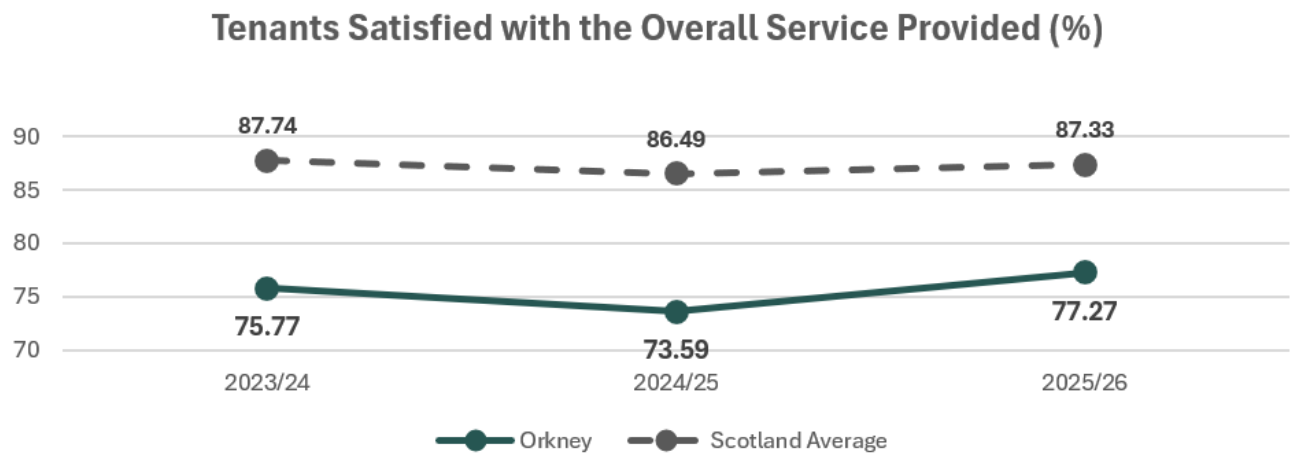
100%
of Stage 1 complaints responded to in full.

34
Compliments received in 2025/26.

Our tenants told us:

	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided.	2026.	**77.27%.**	74.68%.	72.12%.	87.33%.
	2024.	**73.59%.**	79.00%.	72.12%.	86.49%.
	2022.	**75.77%.**	79.48%.	85.91%.	87.74%.
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the Council keeping you informed.	2026.	**74.00%.**	*	*	*
	2024.	**77.00%.**	*	*	*
	2022.	**69.80%.**	78.68%	92.51%.	91.15%.
Percentage of tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate.	2026.	**62.35%**	58.28%.	81.85%.	87.65%.
	2024.	**70.87%.**	52.83%.	81.85%.	87.66%.
	2022.	**60.46%.**	59.77%.	93.81%.	86.81%.

* Comparator information not available.



Communication and Participation

Good Progress

Complaints and compliments

Complaints concerning our Housing Service are dealt with using the Model Complaints Handling procedure which is used by all Local Authorities and Housing Associations. It consists of two stages:

- **Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution:** These complaints are dealt with as close to point of service delivery and as promptly as possible. The target for completion is 5 working days.
- **Stage 2 – Investigation:** In these complaints an independent investigation is undertaken by an allocated Investigating Officer. The target for completion is 20 working days.

Stage 1 Complaints.	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Complaints received.	2025-2026.	**28.**	8.	174.	*
	2024-2025.	**24.**	8.	154.	*
	2023-2024.	**27.**	6.	157.	*
Percentage of complaints upheld.	2025-2026.	**53.57%.**	*	*	*
	2024-2025.	**79.17%.**	*	*	*
	2023-2024.	**86.21%.**	100.00%.	98.31%.	95.34%.

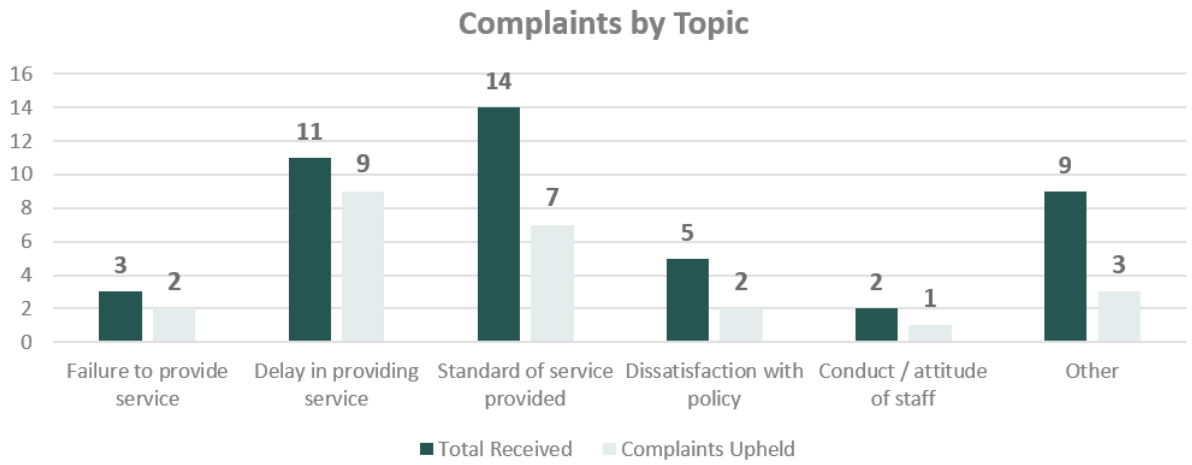
Stage 1 Complaints.	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Percentage of complaints responded to in full.	2025-2026.	**100.00%.**	100.00%	98.88%.	98.09%.
	2024-2025.	**100.00%**	100.00%.	95.45%.	96.26%.
	2023-2024.	**100.00%**	100.00%.	100.00%.	96.71%.

* Comparator information not available due to changes in reporting requirements.

Stage 2 Complaints.	Reporting Year.	Orkney Islands Council.	Shetland Islands Council.	Highland Council.	Scotland Average.
Complaints received.	2025-2026.	**12.**	11.	110.	
	2024-2025.	**19.**	14.	101.	*
	2023-2024.	**14.**	15.	118.	*
Percentage of complaints upheld.	2025-2026.	**69.23%.**			
	2024-2025.	**53.33%.**	*	*	*
	2023-2024.	**44.44%.**	*	*	*
Percentage of complaints responded to in full.	2025-2026.	**81.25%**	100%.	86.16%	92.35%
	2024-2025.	**78.95%.**	92.86%.	85.59%.	89.87%.
	2023-2024.	**100.00%**	100.00%.	90.37%.	90.69%.

The number of Stage 1 complaints responded to in full in 2025/26 remained the same, at 100%. There was a slight increase in the percentage of Stage 2 complaints responded to in full. We received a total of 12 stage 2 complaints. This is down from 19 in 2024/25.

We are dedicated to addressing complaints as quickly as possible while ensuring that each situation is thoroughly and comprehensively resolved.



Compliments

We really appreciate the 34 compliments we received in 2025/26, relating to our repair services.

TENANT ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

77.27%
Overall tenant satisfaction.

74%
Satisfied with information provided.

62.35%
Satisfied with participation opportunities.

100%
Stage 1 complaints responded to on time.

34
Compliments received.

2
Registered Residents' Associations.

Looking Forward

Overall, our performance is generally positive and shows improvements in some areas on the previous year. We are committed to further improvements and will endeavour to evidence this over future years.

Future Plans for Improvements



Housing Development

Up to 150 homes planned over the decade.



Energy Efficiency

Prepare for enhanced 2032 standards.



Repairs

Improve repairs performance.



Relets

Reduce relet times to minimise rental loss.



Finance

Improve rent arrears recovery.



Tenant Engagement

Expand participation opportunities and improve satisfaction levels.

Accessibility

This document has been created with accessibility standards applied. This means that best efforts have been made with the goal that every person, no matter what their abilities, can access the information included effectively.

This document uses a clearly laid out design, using the Arial font with a minimum size of 12pt. Clear paragraph spacing has been applied to the document to enable readers to clearly follow the order in which the information included is best read.

The web based, electronic version of this document has passed accessibility tests so that assistive software for people with visual impairments will read out all information included correctly. All images included within the document also contain alternative text so that they will be described by assistive software.

The contents section of this page has been created with hyperlinks to each section of the document to make the navigation of the document easier.

If you have accessibility issues when reading documents, Orkney Islands Council's Housing Service would encourage any feedback you would like to submit regarding the accessibility of this document. This feedback can be sent in a number of ways with details available in the contact section below.

If you require this document in another language or format, please let us know.

Contact Housing Services

Address:	Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1NY.
Telephone:	01856 873535.
Email:	housing@orkney.gov.uk Please state 'Annual Report' in the email subject if you are sending accessibility feedback for this document.
Website:	https://www.orkney.gov.uk/housing

Your Views

We've refreshed the design and layout of this year's report to make it clearer, more engaging and easier to read. We are committed to continually improving how we communicate with tenants and welcome any comments on this year's format, as well as suggestions for future reports.

If you have any views or ideas, please complete the feedback form overleaf or contact Housing Services using the details above.

Feedback

Question 1: How did you find the length of the report? (Please tick).

☐ Too long. ☐ Just right. ☐ Not long enough.

Question 2: How satisfied are you with the following? (Please tick).

	Very satisfied.	Fairly satisfied.	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.	Fairly dissatisfied.	Very dissatisfied.
Format of report.					
Layout of report.					
Comparison with previous year's performance.					
Comparison with other local authorities.					
Comparison with the Scottish national average.					

Question 3: How easily did you understand the following? (Please tick).

	Very easy.	Fairly easy.	Neither easy nor difficult.	Fairly difficult.	Very difficult.
Performance information.					
Coloured performance icons.					

Question 4: Is there anything you would like to see included in future or general comments on this year's performance report?
