



Scottish Housing
BEST VALUE NETWORK

Scottish HOUSING Best Value Network

ANNUAL REPORT
2012-2013

Scottish HOUSING Best Value Network

Governance

The Network's strategic governance is provided by a board of trustees. Their regular meetings are taken up with business planning to support the SHBVN team and Members. In 2012/13, the Board has considered how SHBVN can invest in new and existing services to secure in new futures and longer term security in tight times.

SHBVN Board 2012/2013

Francine Abercrombie - Chair
Clackmannanshire Council

Peter Smith - Vice Chair
Glasgow Housing Association

John Wolstencroft - Member
Dundee City Council

Robert Laley - Member
Falkirk Council

Karen Finlayson - Member
East Dunbartonshire Council

Morag Boyter - Member
Fife Council

Iver Forsyth - Member
The Highland Council

May Callan - Member
Angus Council

Foreword from the Chair

Since our last AGM both the issue and impact of Welfare reforms and the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) have dominated the landscape. Both are changing the relationship between social housing landlords and their tenants.

Welfare reform has forced landlords to seek new ways to protect vulnerable tenants experiencing reduced income whilst maintaining their own financial viability. The impacts of this regime were recorded in July 2013 by CoSLA¹ as follows:

- 82,500 households in Scottish Social Housing are affected by under occupancy penalties
- Housing Benefit recipients in the responding councils (30) comprise 98% of all working age Housing Benefit recipients in Scotland
- all local authorities (apart from one) with housing stock reported an increase in arrears due to under occupancy.

The SSHC raises challenges to performance cultures with the inclusion of customer satisfaction measures and a requirement from the Scottish Housing Regulator to place tenants at the centre of performance scrutiny.

Recognising these huge challenges for social landlords SHBVN successfully continued to provide support to existing and new members in 2012/13. We have also strengthened our collaboration with other stakeholders and in particular we are working closely with the Scottish Government to deliver Welfare Reform mitigation support to all landlords across Scotland.

We have launched two Social Housing Charter pilot projects to test the challenges of collecting the new Charter indicators and to test the production of the annual report to tenants, also a new requirement on landlords.

The SHBVN team have been pro-active in delivering improved membership services including:

- the production of a range of tools to help landlords meet the Charter requirements;
- additional training on linking strategic planning to service delivery;
- an on going service improvement framework support service;
- an increased number of forums on a wider range of topics;
- a new data validation service.

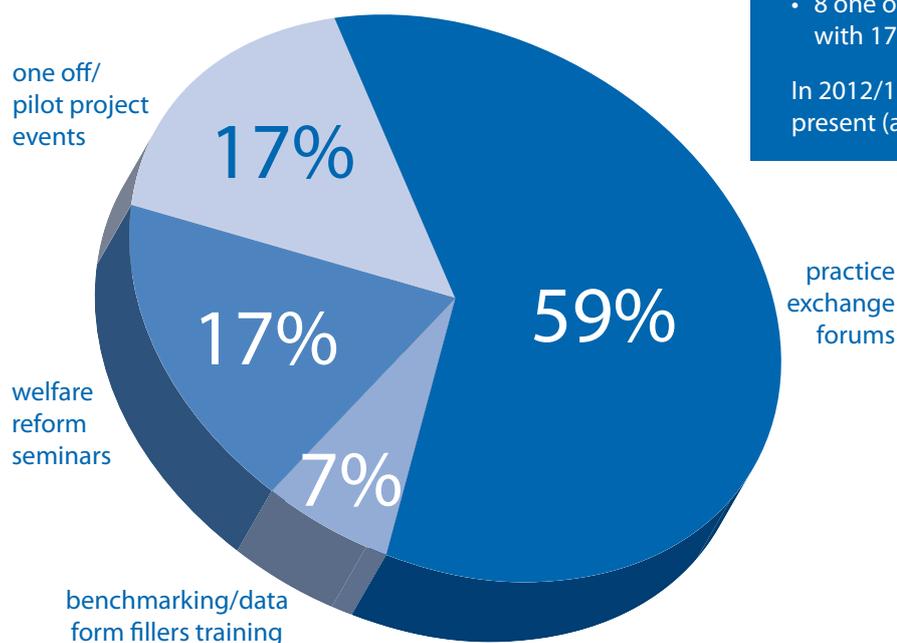
More detail about all the themes above are found in this 2012/13 Annual Report. We are confident that you will find this interesting and informative. It highlights the power of a membership organisation working together to achieve great things. Nurturing this collective capacity will be crucial for SHBVN and its members in the testing times ahead and we will continue to build up sector resilience and retain its place as a leading player in Scottish social housing.



A year in brief

2012/13 – summary of achievements

- Increased membership to over 100 social landlords
- More than 1000 websites users
- 1001 delegates at SHBVN events
- Two Charter pilot projects established
- STAR in Scotland launched with HouseMark Scotland
- Annual benchmarking results published earlier than ever before
- New HTML communications methods introduced
- Increased speaking engagements



2012/13 – a year in figures

In 2012/13, SHBVN officers managed 46 events

- 27 practice exchange forums with 571 delegates;
- 3 benchmarking/data form fillers training with 42 delegates;
- 8 welfare reform seminars with 152 member and 61 non member delegates;
- 8 one off/pilot project events with 175 delegates.

In 2012/13, over 100 guests were present (as presenters) at events.

LA MEMBERS	RSL MEMBERS
Our members built 1140 new homes (1188 in 2011/12)	Our members built 1438 new homes (down from 2026)
Average days to let non low demand 34.8 days (34 days in 2011/12)	Average days to let non low demand 20.9 days (23 days in 2011/12)
All repairs on time 92.6% (93% in 2011/12)	95.8% of all repairs completed on time (95% in 2011/12)
Meeting SHQS 75.6% (66% in 2011/12)	Meeting SHQS up 88.6% (86% in 2011/12)
Rent arrears 7.1% (6.4% in 2011/12)	Rent arrears 2.5% (2.4% in 2011/12)
Satisfaction with overall service 87% (same as 2011/12)	Satisfaction with overall service 90.6% (91% in 2011/12)

SHBVN

will ensure that
INDICATORS

support
members
to meet

regulatory
REQUIREMENTS

while continuing to

provide a
comprehensive

BUSINESS
management tool

SHBVN Performance Services in 2012/13

Benchmarking development

No fundamental changes were made to our benchmarking indicators this year in recognition that the Social Housing Charter will result in a number of changes in 2013/14.

SHBVN supported one of the regional Housing Options Hubs to create a framework of different indicators pertaining to Housing Options and Homelessness. This has resulted in more in depth analysis across six Authorities.

2012/13 also saw the completion of the first full year of the quarterly benchmarking exercise using the Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool. We have also developed a new development benchmarking tool which is being piloted in 2013 and will be available for wider use from April next year.

Self assessment development

- managed and supported desk top reviews and TP peer review;
- work with tenants to develop new formats for tenant led inspections;
- progress in developing Self Assessment Standard;
- design of method and implementation of snapshot Housing Options exercises as part of Hub programme/SHR thematic study support.

Service improvement development

- desk top review of Homelessness Performance Framework;
- desk top review of HA performance management;
- provided one-to-one support to landlords to review their strategic planning arrangements
- developed Housing Options Quality Assurance framework in collaboration with Hub and service users.

Practice Exchange networking and learning services

SHBVN facilitated forums are more popular than ever and provide critical support to member organisations and individuals' professional development. The forums cover:

- Asset Management
- Homelessness and Housing Support
- Housing Management
- Local Housing Strategy
- Service Improvement and Scrutiny

There is also a series of forums for our Housing Association and Cooperative members. Using a tried and tested format of themed events with presentations and group discussion maximises stakeholder engagement. A range of outputs are published on the members' website providing access to wider audiences.

Service Feature: Web Discussion Forums

The members' website contains 8 discussion forums. These are a valuable source of information and to promote discussions outwith events. Over 200 threads have been created through these forums. The issues raised are very diverse:

- Lodgers – an option to address under occupancy;
- Parking of caravans;
- The Factoring Act;
- Affordable Housing Supply;
- SHIP table 7 adaptations;
- Tendering for Care and Repair;
- Rent Collection;
- Welfare Reform and Temporary Accommodation.



Not surprisingly perhaps, the most common themes emerging are Welfare Reform and the Charter with the latter achieving the highest single response rate.

Wider work in 2012/13

Private Sector Service

This is the second year, SHBVN has 'self-funded' a post following the withdrawal of funding by the Scottish Government. The new arrangement continues to work well with recognition of the value and achievements of this group. The focus of the officer and group in 2012/13 has been

- The Implementation of the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 and the Home Owners Housing Panel;
- Enforcement Powers;
- New training resource for Private Sector Housing Officers;
- Adaptations (with linkages to SG Working Group);

There are outputs reflecting on the group's activities and the key topics discussed are published on the members' website.

ALACHO

SHBVN continues to support ALACHO to achieve its aims and objectives. Both organisations work on joint consultation responses and attend working groups to inform and hopefully shape the development of national policy and guidance as well as research.

In addition to this joint working, SHBVN provides services to ALACHO including treasury management and website management.



Welfare Reform

The Welfare Reform service is partly funded by the Scottish Government and available to all Scottish Social Landlords. The service comprises regional events, web based resources and co-convening the national Knowledge Hub platform. Together these elements ensure that issues around Welfare Reform and the impact of this agenda are thoroughly explored.

Nine regional events – in the East, North and West – have taken place since April. Facilitated by a Financial Inclusion expert, these well attended events provide a mix of national and local perspectives. A dedicated web resource has been established to help social landlords share information and good practice.

Looking ahead

We have set out our 3 year strategy in the form of a business plan. In the year ahead we will face a number of challenges as will our members. We will continue to develop and fine tune the business and the services we deliver to ensure they meet our members' needs but also where necessary, reflect the regulatory framework in Scotland.

In terms of business planning we aim to:

- provide continued support to our members to embed the new approaches demanded by the Social Housing Charter;
- publish the findings of our two Charter Pilot projects to provide guidance to our members;
- continue to improve and expand our services to ensure they fully support our member's to achieve continuous improvement.

The most significant challenge faced by our members in the

coming year will be the impact of Welfare Reform. This issue is having a significant effect on the social housing sector in terms of the long term future of new house provision but also on individual landlord's financial viability due to reduced income and mounting debts. To support landlords deal with Welfare Reform and the other challenges that exist we will:

- provide analysis of the benchmarking results highlighting the potential or actual impacts of Welfare Reform;
- develop improved website functionality to allow members to produce more sophisticated analysis of performance;
- develop or self assessment tools to support and encourage a robust and challenging approach;
- continue to work with the Scottish Government and others to deliver a series of practice exchange events to highlight and share both the challenges and the good practice that exists.

SHBVN

aims to support
SOCIAL
landlords
in Scotland
to deliver
customer
FOCUSED, EFFICIENT
and effective
services

Vision Statement

SHBVN has 4 key aims as detailed below.

- to drive up the standard of housing services across Scotland by identifying and sharing good practice through robust and routine cost and performance benchmarking;
- to facilitate and support co-operation between members to enable the exchange of performance results and good practice;
- to provide direct support to members to achieve continuous improvement and best value through training and facilitation of self assessment, peer review and inspection support activities;
- to promote the activities of the Network nationally to ensure the key challenges facing members are recognised and if possible addressed.

Source: Scottish Housing Best Value Network Business Plan 2012-2015

Financial Statement

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013

	Year to 31 Mar 13	
	£	
INCOMING RESOURCES		
VOLUNTARY INCOME		
Grant for SHS	295	
Funds introduced by SHBVN Consortium	–	
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	295	
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INVESTMENT INCOME		
Bank interest receivable	1,259	
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INCOMING RESOURCES FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		
Membership subscriptions	278,907	
Management and consultancy services	104,601	
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	383,508	
	<hr/>	
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	<hr/>	
	385,062	
	<hr/>	
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		
Staff costs - Wages & Salaries	136,179	
Staff costs - Employer's NIC	12,996	
Staff costs - Pension costs	9,865	
Establishment - Rent	10,653	
Establishment - Repairs & maintenance	196	
Establishment - Insurance	1,984	
Establishment - Subscriptions	873	
Motor and travel costs	2,241	
Legal & professional fees	2,275	
Office expenses - Telephone	1,772	
Office expenses - Other	341	
Depreciation	2,177	
AGM costs	2,490	
Forum and conference costs	27,805	
Printing and stationery	1,939	280
Staff training	1,180	555
SHS costs	295	–
Bank charges and interest	35	35
Staff training and recruitment	1,950	1,300
Marketing	19,054	960
Sundry expenses	50	1,195
Policy manager costs	31,998	–
Sundry costs	286	358
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	268,634	<hr/>
		97,549
		<hr/>
GOVERNANCE COSTS		
Accountancy fees	1,844	
Independent examination fees	700	
Legal and professional fees	3,578	
Costs of trustees' meetings	752	
	<hr/>	
	6,874	
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TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	<hr/>	
	275,508	
	<hr/>	
NET INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR	<hr/>	
	109,554	
	<hr/>	



Scottish Housing
BEST VALUE NETWORK

The SHBVN team



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The SHBVN website addresses are:

www.shbvn.org.uk (public site)
www.shbvn.org (member site)

Scottish Housing Best Value Network is a Scottish charity registered under charity number: SCO42381