YOUR Homes Services Voice

Annual Report to TENANTS 2025/26



13,467
homes owned

114
new social-rent homes completed

2.1 hours
average emergency repair time

Image: Recently completed council homes at Kirkton, Fraserburgh

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

Welcome

A message from the Head of Housing and Building Standards, Ally Macleod

Welcome to your annual report as tenants of Aberdeenshire Council. This sets out your feedback and combines it with our performance information on the services you receive.

There are many positives: some of the lowest rent arrears in Scotland, fewer empty properties, the second-fastest emergency repairs response time in Scotland, quicker responses to repairs overall, homeless people spending the shortest time in temporary accommodation in the country, a well-regarded internal wall insulation project making homes warmer and more affordable.

Importantly we see areas to improve: how we communicate with you, how we enable you to take part where you wish to do so, and how we continue to invest in your homes and services, while we ensure you receive value for money.

This year we have carried out a satisfaction survey and engaged in-depth through focus groups. Your tenant representatives have been active holding discussions in all sheltered housing schemes, and ensuring your voice is heard by attending Aberdeenshire Council committees and working groups alongside councillors as your tenant representatives.

Looking ahead, we will build on this by taking forward the improvements you have identified and will feed back on our progress.

At a glance

Key highlights from our year

Homes and rents



13,467 homes owned

£69.6 million

5.0% average weekly rent increase

Repairs



2.1 hours

average time for emergency repairs

7.4 working days

average time for non-emergency repairs

Right first time



97.7%

of reactive repairs were completed right first time.

Re-letting homes



44.9 days

average re-let time better than the Scottish average of 51.7 days.

New homes



73 new homes for social rent

completed across completed Mintlaw, Fraserburgh and Banff.

Tenant voice



56%

satisfaction with opportunities to participate

How to read this report

We compare our 2025/26 performance with the Scottish average where the Regulator publishes one. A better result is not always the larger number. For repair times and re-let times, a lower number generally means a faster service.

Doing Well | **Close to Average** | **Needs Attention**

What tenants told us

The figures below come from the most recent satisfaction survey shown on the Scottish Housing Regulator website.

Measure	Aberdeenshire (2026/27)	Scottish Local Authority Average (2025/26)
Satisfied with the overall service	**77%**	**82.9%**
Good at keeping tenants informed	**68%**	**84.2%**
Satisfied with opportunities to participate	**56%**	**83.3%**

(Note: Scottish Local Authority Average figures for 2026/27 not currently available.)

Our response

While overall satisfaction has remained fairly similar to our previous survey, your feedback helps to direct us to areas that need to improve. Over the last five years our operating costs have increased mainly as a result of inflation in the construction sector. This has had an impact on what we have been able to afford to do.

During a period of significant investment and service change, some tenants told us that information was not always clear, timely or easy to find. We are working with tenants to improve the day-to-day information they receive about their homes and housing services. Tenant feedback helps us make information clearer, more accessible and more relevant, and to explain service changes, decisions and outcomes in plain language. We will also use information about tenants' needs and preferences to provide more targeted communications, while ensuring that tenants who are not online can continue to access information and services.

We will make participation opportunities easier to understand and offer a range of ways to become involved, from short surveys and focus groups to tenant scrutiny. We will monitor progress against these priorities and report back to tenants on what you said and what we did as a result.

Looking after your home

Repairs were one of our strongest areas in 2025/26. Emergency and non-emergency repair times were both faster than the Scottish average, and most reactive repairs were completed right first time.

Measure	Aberdeenshire	Scottish average	Position
Emergency repairs	**2.1 hours**	**3.5 hours**	**Faster**
Non-emergency repairs	**7.4 days**	**8.8 days**	**Faster**
Reactive repairs right first time	**97.7%**	**95.3%**	**Higher**
Tenant satisfaction with repairs	**87.4%**	**88.1%**	**Close**

The Scottish Housing Regulator requires all social landlords to report the measures shown above. While these figures provide an important national comparison, Housing & Building Standards also gathers feedback directly from tenants following repair work. A random sample of tenants is contacted after repairs are completed to understand their experience and satisfaction with the service received. As the surveys involve different tenants, questions and time periods, the results should not be compared directly, but give a better regular snapshot of service satisfaction. Recent survey findings show that tenants are satisfied with the quality of work undertaken.

Repairs Satisfaction - Quality of Work 2025/26



98%

satisfied with the courtesy of workers



99%

satisfied with efforts to minimise damage



98%

satisfied with the respect shown for their home and belongings



96%

satisfied with workers clearing up after themselves



97%

satisfied with the time taken to complete the repair



93%

satisfied with the overall quality of the repair

Quality and energy efficiency

The SHQS is set by the Scottish Government and lays out a minimum standard for all social housing in Scotland. 83.8% of our homes met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), compared with a Scottish average of 89.5%. The SHQS makes allowances for properties that cannot be brought up to the standard for different reasons (these are called exemptions and abeyances). After these are taken out, only 43 properties (0.32% of our stock) count as failing the standard.

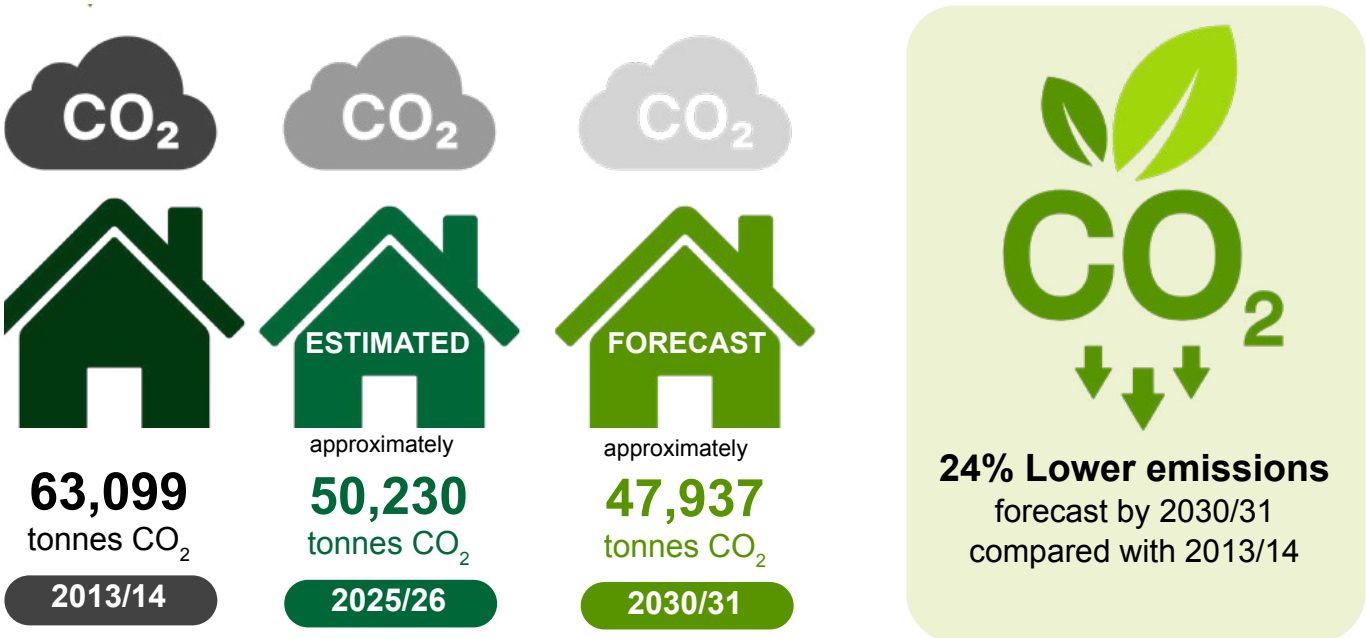
In the year ahead we will continue to invest in your homes, with upgrades planned to 1,800 properties to doors, windows, kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, dormers and porches.

Reducing carbon emissions

The Housing Improvement Programme is expected to continue reducing carbon emissions through measures such as insulation, windows, doors and heating improvements. Estimated annual emissions fell from 63,099 tonnes of CO2 in 2013/14 to about 50,230 tonnes in 2025/26. The current forecast is about 47,937 tonnes by 2030/31.

Making our homes greener

Reducing carbon emissions through home improvements.



Damp, condensation and mould

We want every tenant to have a safe, warm and healthy home. Our dedicated team investigates reports of damp, condensation, and mould, identifies the likely cause, and arranges any work needed. This may include repairing leaks, improving ventilation or heating, treating affected areas, or carrying out insulation and other building work. We monitor each case and review the outcome to help make sure the problem has been resolved.

Damp, condensation and mould: 2025/26



575

Cases resolved during the year



44.4 days

Average time to resolve cases



15.3%

Resolved cases reopened during the year



249

Cases still open at 31 March 2026

Aberdeenshire Council has a dedicated Damp, Condensation and Mould (DCM) Team which manages cases from start to finish. Our in-house monitoring system helps us record every report, track progress and identify recurring issues. When a concern is reported, an inspection is arranged to identify the cause and determine the most appropriate solution. This may include repairs to address leaks, improvements to ventilation, heating or insulation, specialist treatment, or wider building improvements where required.

Cases involving extensive mould, health concerns, or vulnerable household members are prioritised. If you notice damp, condensation, or mould in your home please report it as soon as possible so that we can investigate and agree the action needed.

We also recognise the importance of listening to tenants. Tenants were consulted during the development and review of our Damp, Condensation, and Mould Procedure, helping to shape how information is provided, how cases are managed, and how we communicate with households throughout the process.

If you have any concerns regarding the presence of damp, condensation and mould in your home, you can report these to us by:

Telephone: 03456 08 12 03

Email: dcmteam@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Visiting your local Housing office

Your rent and value for money

Your rent is more than a payment for your home. It helps us repair and maintain council houses, keep homes safe, improve their quality and energy efficiency, manage tenancies and neighbourhoods, and provide advice and support when tenants need it. In 2025/26, total rent due was £69,585,330 and average weekly rents increased by 5.0%.

We recognise that rent is one of the largest regular household costs and that any increase can affect the choices tenants make about food, heating and other essentials. When considering rent levels and investment priorities, we aim to balance affordability with the need to keep homes safe, warm and in good condition, and to protect services for tenants now and in the future.

Size of home	Aberdeenshire weekly rent	Scottish average
Bed-sit	£66.07	£91.63
1 Bed	£97.92	£98.61
2 Bed	£100.50	£101.42
3 Bed	£117.01	£110.33
4 Bed	£134.08	£121.71

Rent figures include different property types and service arrangements.
Your own rent depends on your home and any applicable charges.

Value for money is not only about how our rents compare with others. It is also about the service you experience: getting repairs completed, receiving clear information, being treated fairly, and seeing investment made in your home and community. We monitor performance, costs and tenant feedback so that we can focus resources on the things that matter most to tenants and explain where improvements are still needed.

If you are worried about paying your rent, we encourage you to contact us as early as possible – you can find our contact details at the end of this report. We will listen to your circumstances, explain the options available and work with you to agree realistic next steps. This may include checking benefit entitlement, arranging affordable repayments, referring you for independent money or welfare advice, and helping you access energy, discretionary or charitable support where available.

Collecting rent and supporting tenants

In 2025/25, we collected an amount equal to 98.1% of current and past rent due, compared with the Scottish Local Authority average of 99.6%. Normally we collect more than the average by this measure, but last year some monthly payments in April were counted in the 2024/25 figures instead. This is down to how our financial systems work rather than a real loss of income. Current tenant arrears were 1.79% of rent due using the Regulator methodology, compared to the average for Scottish local authorities of 5.17%. Our teams focus on early contact, advice, and support for tenants who are struggling to pay.

We work to sustain tenancies because a safe and secure home supports people's wellbeing, family life and connection to their community. Preventing a tenancy from breaking down also helps avoid

homelessness and the personal and financial impact of losing a home. We therefore treat eviction as a last resort and seek to resolve difficulties as early as possible.

Our early intervention approach aims to identify problems before rent debt or other tenancy difficulties become unmanageable. Where a tenant misses a payment or tells us they are struggling, we seek to make contact promptly, understand their circumstances and agree realistic next steps. This can include affordable repayment arrangements, advice on rent and household budgeting, help to check benefit entitlement and referrals to specialist services for welfare rights, money advice, employability, health or wider housing support.

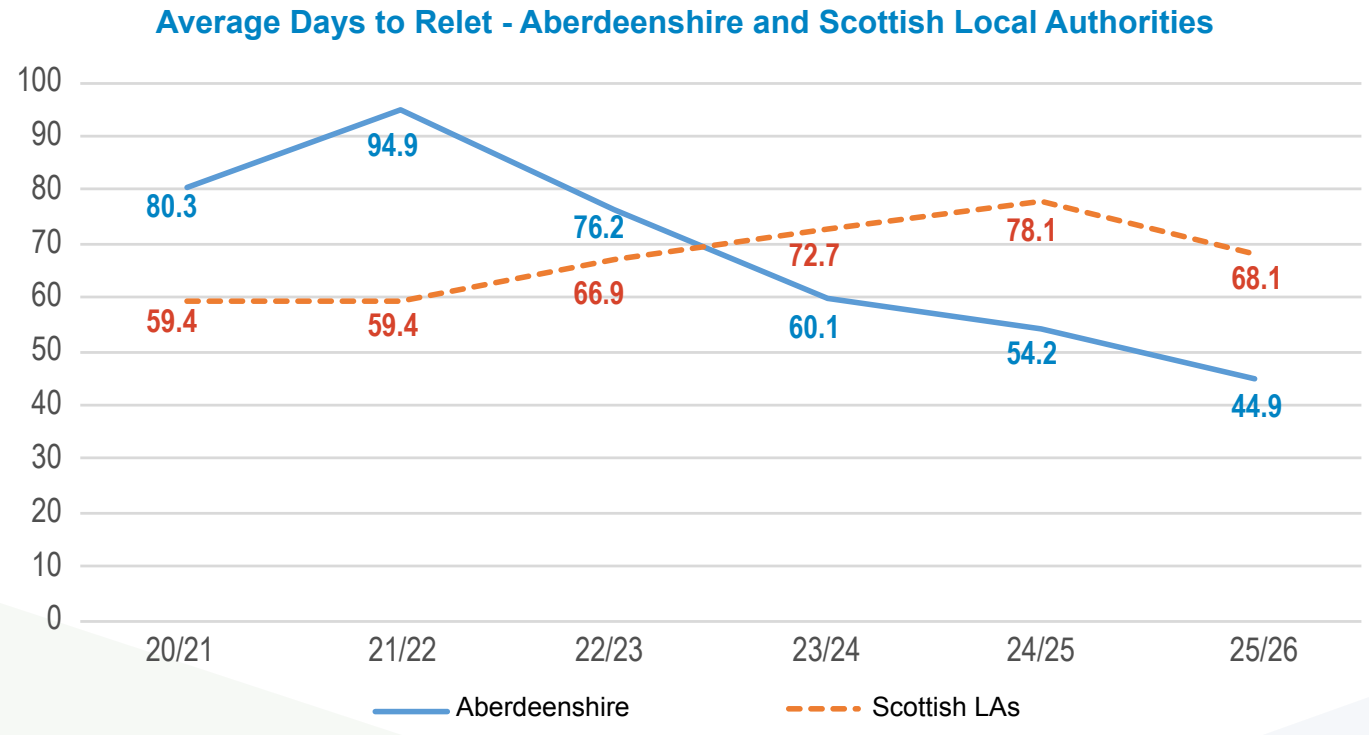
We also work with partners to connect tenants with external financial assistance where this is available. This may include discretionary or charitable funding, energy support and other cost-of-living help that can reduce immediate pressure on household budgets. By combining early advice, practical support and appropriate referrals, we aim to help tenants address the underlying causes of rent debt, maintain regular payments and remain securely in their homes.

Empty homes

44.9 days
average time to re-let a home

1.4%
rent not collected because homes were empty

Re-let performance improved from 54.2 days in 2024/25 to 44.9 days in 2025/26. Rent loss from empty homes reduced from 1.7% to 1.4%. The Regulator comparison shows 1.4% for Aberdeenshire and 1.1% for Scotland, so there is still more to do. In the last year we took part in a review of our process to re-let empty homes. This involved a number of other Councils to compare our approaches and learn from best practice. This has helped us to sustain the longer-term improvements we have seen in the timescales taken to turnaround and let empty properties.



Tenancies and neighbourhoods

Helping tenancies to last

89.8% of tenants who started a tenancy during 2024/25 kept it for at least one year. This improved from 86.3% in the previous year, but remained below the Scottish local authority average of 92.4%. We will continue to improve early support to better understand why some tenancies end in the first year.

Helping tenants stay in their homes

89.8% **of new tenants stayed in their home for at east one year in 2024/25.**



Almost 9 in 10

+3.5

percentage points
Improvement from 86.3% last year

92.4%

Scottish average
We're 2.6 percentage points below

What we're doing next

We're improving support for new tenants and working to understand why some tenancies end within the first year.

From a tenancy management perspective, sustaining a tenancy begins before a tenant moves in. We aim to make sure new tenants understand the terms of their tenancy, how to pay their rent, how to report repairs, the standards expected within the home and neighbourhood, and where to seek help. Early contact after a tenancy starts can identify practical difficulties, support needs or financial pressures before they place the tenancy at risk.

Housing officers maintain contact with tenants and respond when concerns arise, including rent debt, property condition, household changes, neighbour difficulties, antisocial behaviour or problems engaging with essential services. We seek to understand the circumstances behind the issue, agree clear and proportionate actions with the tenant, and monitor progress. This may involve home visits, tenancy checks, repayment or action plans, liaison with repairs and community safety colleagues, and reasonable adjustments to the way we communicate or deliver services.

Where additional help is needed, we work with the tenants' agreement wherever possible to make timely referrals to relevant services. These may include welfare rights and money advice, housing support, health and social care, employability services, energy advice, community safety, substance-use services or other voluntary and statutory partners. A coordinated approach helps address the underlying causes of tenancy difficulties rather than dealing only with the immediate concern.

We also take early and proportionate action where tenancy conditions are not being met. We explain the concern, the steps needed to resolve it and the support available, and we keep our response under review. Formal tenancy action is used only where necessary, after opportunities for engagement and support have been considered. Our aim is to protect the tenant's home, the condition of council housing and the safety and wellbeing of neighbours and communities.

Sheltered Housing and Independent Living

The Sheltered Housing Review forms part of the wider review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and considers how sheltered housing can remain affordable, sustainable and responsive to tenants' changing needs. The work has examined the long-term viability of individual schemes, future investment requirements, staffing and service arrangements, and the changing role of technology. It has also developed a clearer distinction between Sheltered Housing and Independent Living, while recognising the importance tenants place on independence, safety, security, communal facilities and connection to their local community.

Tenant engagement has been central to the review. Following earlier consultation on the proposals, officers and representatives from the Sheltered Housing Tenant Forum have been visiting schemes across Aberdeenshire to explain the agreed changes, hear directly from tenants and families, and discuss local priorities. These meetings have covered future staffing arrangements, service charges, building investment, heating and energy efficiency, repairs and maintenance, telecare and the transition from analogue alarm equipment, digital door-entry systems, and the need for clearer and more accessible communication.

The Sheltered Housing Tenant Forum provides a direct route for tenants to share their views, raise concerns and influence how the service develops. Forum representatives have supported the programme of scheme meetings and have helped shape discussions about the Independent Living name, tenant communications and future service arrangements. The Forum's working groups are also examining practical issues including energy efficiency, scheme improvements and opportunities to secure external funding. Feedback from this work is being considered as implementation plans develop, with a continuing commitment to keep tenants informed and to explain what has changed as a result of their involvement.

Complaints

Complaints help us learn when services have not met expectations. Our response times were above the published targets in 2025/26. A Stage 1 complaint is also known as a front-line complaint and is usually straightforward to resolve. Stage 2 complaints are more complicated and usually need staff to investigate before we can respond to them. Like most public-sector organisations, we have seen an increase in the use of AI to make complaints. While this can support people to explain their complaint, AI can also make it harder to deal with complaints by making them much longer and getting things wrong (for example, by quoting English laws rather than Scottish ones). **Therefore, if you use AI to help you make a complaint, please make sure to read it over and check the details before you send it.**

Complaint stage	Target	Average response time
Stage 1	5 working days	**8.07 working days**
Stage 2	20 working days	**21.75 working days**

We endeavour to respond to complaints as quickly as possible and it is positive to see that Stage 2 response time improved from 30.09 days in 2024/25 to 21.75 days last year. Fundamentally, it is important that we review and respond to each in full. We will continue to monitor response times, identify any delays and use complaint findings to improve services. We are also keen to involve tenants in scrutinising how we handle our complaints to ensure that we get it right.

More homes for Aberdeenshire



Recently completed council homes at Kirkton, Fraserburgh

Aberdeenshire Council completed **73 new homes** for social rent during 2025/26:

53 homes at **Nether Aden, Mintlaw**

6 suitable for **particular needs**
Of which **4** suitable for **wheelchair users**

16 homes at **Kirkton, Fraserburgh**

10 suitable for **particular needs and** suitable for **wheelchair users**

4 bungalows at **Ladysbridge, Banff**

All suitable for **particular needs**

The developments include flats, houses and bungalows. They have been built to high energy-efficiency standards. Some homes were adapted for individual needs, including level-access showers, strengthened ceilings for hoists and electric door openers. The Council also worked with Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership to provide suitable homes for people with particular housing and care needs, including some of those detailed above.

Our priorities for improvement

We want this report to be honest about what went well and what needs attention. These are the main priorities arising from the performance information.

► Communicate more clearly

Provide relevant housing information to those who need it, use data and tenant feedback to inform engagement, and explain decisions and outcomes in plain language.

► Improve access to services

Support tenants to access and interact with more of our services digitally.

► Make participation easier

Promote all the ways tenants can get involved, including online and in-person options, focus groups and tenant scrutiny.

► Learn from complaints

Monitor delays, learn from complaints and report on service changes made as a result.

► Support successful tenancies

Strengthen early tenancy support, improve the information collected about why tenancies end, and reduce the number of homes becoming vacant each year.

► Reduce time and rent lost from empty homes

Build on the improvement in re-let times while continuing to reduce avoidable rent loss.

► Keep homes safe and in good condition

Continue investment, safety checks and responsive action on damp, condensation and mould.

How you can make a difference

You do not need to join a formal group to have your say. You can choose the level of involvement that suits you.

- Respond to surveys and consultations
- Join a short focus group, online or in person
- Help review information before it is sent to tenants
- Join tenant scrutiny to look closely at a service and recommend improvements
- Contact the Housing Service with feedback or questions

For more information on how you can make a difference please visit our "Your Homes, Your Say" bulletin.



Get in touch

If you have a question about this report, need housing support or want to get involved, contact the Housing team at Aberdeenshire Council.

Telephone 03456 081203

Email housing@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Online www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Alternative formats

Please contact us if you need this report in another format or language, including large print or Braille.