



West of
Scotland
Housing
Association

Tenant Advisory Group
Annual Report 2023/24

Contents

1. Introduction
2. What is Tenant Advisory Group and what do we do?
3. What have we worked on in the last year?
 - Tenant Scrutiny Group
 - Rate Your Estate
 - Corporate Business Plan
 - Rent and Services Engagement
 - Consultations
4. Ongoing Activities
5. Our focus for 2024/25
6. How you can get involved

1. Introduction

This is the sixth annual report covering the work of West of Scotland Housing Association's Tenant Advisory Group.

We have had another busy year with the highlight being the re-launching of the Tenant Scrutiny Group, which you can read more about below. We have also continued to engage with West of Scotland on other key issues impacting tenants and other customers.

You can read about all the work TAG have undertaken as well as our priorities for the year ahead below. We will continue to engage with tenants and other customers in consultations on a range of topics throughout the year.

We hope that you find our report interesting, and if you want to get involved in any work we have planned for the year ahead, please get in touch using the details below – we are always looking for new members of the Group.

2. What is the Tenant Advisory Group and what do we do?

What is TAG?

TAG stands for Tenant Advisory Group. We are a group of West of Scotland Housing Association tenants who work together to improve services that tenants receive. We have a formal remit that sets out the activities that we will undertake on an ongoing basis. TAG will:

- Assess WSHA's quality of service delivery and customer care
- Review policies and procedures which impact on tenants and other customers
- Support the growth in the number of tenants who engage with the Association
- Carry out scrutiny activities of housing and related services, and report any findings, including recommendations for improvement, to the Management Committee
- Monitor and review the progress of the Customer Engagement Strategy on a regular basis

We meet on a monthly basis with West of Scotland HA staff to consider the above. We would usually aim to have a speaker from the Association to discuss a policy or procedural change. We receive regular updates on performance, and one of our most important tasks is to oversee the implementation of the Customer Engagement Strategy.

We prepare reports that are presented to the Board of WSHA, generally following our Scrutiny activities but also through our Annual Report. The Board and management of the Association value the work that we do and know that they make better decisions when they involve TAG and other tenants in the process.

3. What have we worked on in 2023/24?

Since our last report we have undertaken a wide range of work, of which you can read more below. We know that tenants have busy lives, and lots of you cannot afford the time to come to regular meetings. We also know that some tenants have particular interests when it comes to WSHA services – if you read something below that you want to know more about, please get in touch with us.

Tenant Scrutiny Group

Since reconvening, the Tenant Scrutiny Group have undertaken three activities looking at:

- WSHA’s Customer Service Charter
- WSHA’s Estate Management Procedure
- WSHA’s Damp and Mould Policy

For each activity the Group prepares a term of reference, which sets out the scope of the activity, as well as identifying the methods the Group will use to assess the service area. A key part of the approach is gathering feedback from both staff and tenants and benchmarking the approach against best practice from other landlords.

The Group made a total of nine recommendations across the three reports, of which eight were accepted by Management.

The Group have now started their next activity, which will be outlined in section 5 of this report.

Since our last report we have undertaken a wide range of work, of which you can read more below. We know that tenants have busy lives, and lots of you cannot afford the time to come to regular meetings. We also know that some tenants have particular interests when it comes to WSHA services – if you read something below that you want to know more about, please get in touch with us.

Tenant Scrutiny Group

Since reconvening, the Tenant Scrutiny Group have undertaken three activities looking at:

- WSHA’s Customer Service Charter
- WSHA’s Estate Management Procedure
- WSHA’s Damp and Mould Policy

For each activity the Group prepares a term of reference, which sets out the scope of the activity, as well as identifying the methods the Group will use to assess the service area. A key part of the approach the Group adopts is gathering feedback from both staff and tenants and benchmarking the approach against best practice from other landlords.

The Group made a total of nine recommendations across the three reports, of which eight were accepted by Management.

The Group have now started their next activity, which will be outlined in section 5 of this report.

Rate Your Estate

The Group have reconvened the estate inspections that were last undertaken pre-Covid. The Group promotes Rate Your Estate on the Association website, and regularly on social media, to encourage tenants to request visits to their area. Once a request has been received the Group visit the area, speak to the local tenants, and identify alongside the tenant any issues in the area.

Three separate visits have been undertaken in Hillhead, Woodlands and Springburn in recent months, with recommendations from each visit being passed to the Housing and Repairs Teams as appropriate.

The Group also take the opportunity to regularly visit void properties so that we can assess how well the Association is meeting their 'lettings standard'.

Rent and Services Engagement

This year we worked with the Association to change the way they engaged with tenants about the annual rent consultation.

Previous years have involved a consultation process beginning in November with responses required by early January. This year a new approach was adopted, where WSHA engaged with TAG much earlier on about a range of considerations relating to the rent increase for the year ahead. We participated in a video that was used to encourage all tenants to get involved in a series of discussions which set out the considerations WSHA take into account when reviewing the budget and any proposed increase.

As a Group we felt this activity worked well as it removed the focus from the % increase proposed, and focused on what the impact would be of either a lower or higher increase.

Corporate Business Plan

Every September, as WSHA begins the process of developing the Business Plan for the year ahead, TAG meet with the senior management team to have a discussion about priorities. WSHA always take on board our views and these are reflected in the Key Business Objectives agreed.

Consultations

Whenever the Association is reviewing a customer-facing policy they will attend a meeting with us to present any key changes to the policy and provide an overview of what the policy covers.

In the last year we have been consulted with, and provided feedback on the following policies and services:

- Decant Policy
- Repairs Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Cost of Living Action Plan
- Willowacre Trust Business Plan
- Charing Cross Transfer Review
- Service Charges
- Customer Care Charter

We will always request that where the topic under discussion is one that impacts all tenants, WSHA undertake a full tenant consultation. This would be undertaken via surveys publicised on social media, their website and via the tenant newsletter, Westworld.

4. Ongoing Activities

As outlined above, one of the key responsibilities of TAG is to oversee implementation of the Customer Engagement Strategy and assess WSHA's performance. On a quarterly basis we review the Association's progress against the key priorities in the Strategy and are updated on any engagement activities planned or undertaken. We also receive the same performance report that is presented to Board, which shows progress against Corporate Business Plan objectives, and the agreed Key Performance Indicators.

5. What will we focus on in 2024/25?

In the year ahead we have a number of priorities to focus on:

- Ongoing oversight of Customer Engagement Strategy with a focus on actions around engaging with younger tenants and MMR tenants
- Concluding the repairs scrutiny activity that has been underway for the last few months
- Increasing involvement with both the Tenant Advisory Group and the Tenant Scrutiny Group
- Undertaking Rate Your Estate visits across WSHA communities
- Monitoring progress against the KPIs and Corporate Business Plan priorities
- Providing feedback on policies and procedures as and when they are being reviewed

6. How can you get involved?

The report above provides a flavour of the work Tenant Advisory Group undertakes. As well as the above, our meetings provide a good opportunity to meet with other tenants and share experiences of WSHA services.

If you would like to become involved in TAG, or want to know more please get in touch with us via email at haveyoursay@westscot.co.uk, or call 0141 550 5060