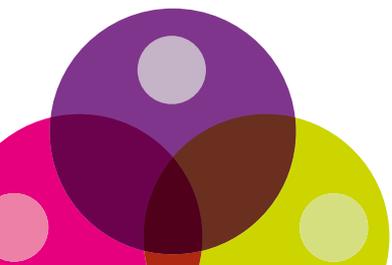




Developing **effective**  
tenant scrutiny  
**A practice guide for**  
landlords and tenants







## Foreword

The Scottish Government is committed to assisting social landlords in Scotland to develop and improve their scrutiny activities and practice. To support this aim, the Scottish Government commissioned the development and delivery of a national scrutiny training and learning programme.

The Stepping Up to Scrutiny (SU2S) training and learning programme was first launched in 2013. A group of 'early adopter' social landlords and their tenants, which included both local authority and registered social landlord (RSL) organisations of different sizes and geographical locations, were involved in the development of the content of the training programme. They helped to ensure that the design of the session content and the programme, as rolled out across Scotland from 2014-2016, met the needs of the sector as well as the learning aims of the Scottish Government.

The programme was delivered on behalf of the Scottish Government through a partnership between the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland and HouseMark Scotland. It was designed to: improve organisations' understanding of scrutiny activities linked to the Scottish Social Housing Charter and related regulatory framework; prepare social landlords and their tenants/service users to plan and undertake scrutiny in practice; and to strengthen the connection between performance management, continuous improvement, value for money (VFM) and scrutiny.

As part of the longer term legacy of the programme, the training materials used have been developed into a training pack, which is free to download from <http://bit.ly/2ssBZYK>

This resource will allow organisations to train their own staff and tenants to deliver the sessions that make up the programme, as well as enabling them to benefit from the learning that has taken place during the three years of the programme, and give them the skills and knowledge to undertake scrutiny activities of the services they provide.

Further copies of this practice guide are available from <http://bit.ly/2sjwWdi>

**Anne Cook**

*Head of Social Housing Services Team*

**Scottish Government**



## Acknowledgements

This guide has been sponsored by the Scottish Government as part of its support for developing scrutiny activities in Scotland, including the SU2S national training and learning programme for tenants and landlords, which was delivered over a three-year period from 2013-2016 by CIH Scotland in partnership with HouseMark Scotland.

The guide builds upon the extensive work that CIH and HouseMark Scotland have carried out during the SU2S programme, and on other work taking place in Scotland to develop scrutiny activities. The practice guide includes several examples of scrutiny in practice. These are drawn from organisations across Scotland that are engaged in involving tenants in the scrutiny of services, whether they have undertaken the SU2S programme or not.

The practice guide also draws on material from the publication *New Approaches to Tenant Scrutiny*, published by CIH in 2014 and sponsored by Circle Housing and Halton Housing Trust. We would like to thank the original authors and sponsors for making their guidance available, as it has helped to inform the shape of this publication.

### **Our thanks also to the following organisations who contributed practice examples:**

- Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership (DGHP)
- East Ayrshire Council
- East Lothian Council
- Hillcrest Housing Association
- Irvine Housing Association
- Link Group
- Osprey Group
- North Ayrshire Council
- Perth and Kinross Council
- River Clyde Homes
- Viewpoint Housing Association

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# Contents

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1. What is scrutiny all about?	4
2. What are others doing?	8
3. How do you make sure you get it right?	27
4. Final thoughts	32

## Appendix

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Finding out more	34
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# 1. What is scrutiny all about?

Housing providers have been involving and consulting with their tenants for years. Increasingly, many are going further by giving tenants and other customers formal opportunities to analyse and challenge their performance and decision-making. The aim is to improve organisational performance and the quality and standard of services that they provide for their tenants.

Successful organisations share a common way of working: they know, understand and respond to their current and future customers. They do this by developing approaches and mechanisms to engage with service users. Through scrutiny, tenants and other customers can make a substantial and central contribution to the assessment of their landlord's performance. Scrutiny is a critical examination of services, underpinned by good quality, up-to-date performance data and information that is made available to those involved in scrutiny activities.

Scrutiny is about being able to ask landlords questions based on clear information and data, such as: why is a service delivered in a particular way; why are particular timescales in place; how much is this costing; can costs be reduced while still providing a good level of service; could we do this better or differently? The answers to these and similar questions should lead to recommendations that result in change and improvement.

The Three Principles for Effective Scrutiny are:

**Independence** – scrutiny activities should be separate from governance, management and mainstream tenant participation structures, but have a formal recognised status with support from the organisation at the outset.

**Formality** – scrutiny activities should include clear roles, remit, terms of reference and lines of reporting for those taking part.

**Power** – tenants and other customers involved in scrutiny activities should be able to examine services and standards, and make recommendations for service improvements. Landlords should respond to this by agreeing which measures can be implemented and, where they can't be implemented, explaining fully why not.

Scrutiny activities can include service-specific scrutiny, where a particular service or policy is scrutinised, or scrutiny of a range of activities, where performance is scrutinised on a regular and systematic basis. This can include comparing performance against, for example, the previous quarter's performance and looking at trends, improvements and dips in performance to identify areas where service-specific scrutiny may be needed.

This practice guide looks at the opportunities and challenges of establishing and developing tenant scrutiny activities within housing organisations in order to improve landlord efficiency and customer satisfaction.

The guide is divided into three main sections:

- **'Why should you be doing something about this now?'** It looks at the reasons for tenant scrutiny and what tenants, other customers and organisations can achieve;
- **'What are others doing?'** It includes a number of case studies showcasing the work of other organisations and demonstrates how tenant scrutiny can improve services and increase VFM in service delivery; and
- **'How do you make sure you get it right?'** It sets out the issues you should consider to establish effective tenant scrutiny in your organisation and to deliver the outcomes you want.

## Why should you be doing something about this now?

The housing sector's approach to tenant participation is underpinned by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, which created a legal requirement for landlords to actively develop and support tenant participation. Tenant scrutiny is, therefore, an important component of meeting the expectation to continuously improve landlord performance in relation to participation.

Tenant scrutiny involves adopting a tenant-centred approach to landlord activities, which delivers benefits to tenants, landlords and communities alike. It's an approach where a housing provider's frameworks for directing, accounting for, monitoring, assessing and reviewing its own direction and performance are based on the views and priorities of tenants. Done well, it can give tenants the power to work collaboratively with landlords on decisions about service delivery through a detailed understanding of performance, including performance data. Scrutiny is therefore a natural progression from more traditional types of tenant participation.

This tenant-focused approach sits alongside other parts of a housing organisation's governance, management, participation and quality frameworks. These might include the business planning cycle, internal audit, performance management and continuous improvement processes, options appraisals and oversight by the Governing Board or local authority councillors.

Tenant scrutiny can deliver better outcomes for both tenants and landlords covering a wide spectrum of activities and ensuring better VFM. In terms of delivering outcomes, it can have a wide-ranging impact across the organisation, from ensuring effective governance and delivering services to supporting individual and community empowerment.



Ultimately, the purpose of tenant scrutiny is to improve organisational performance and the standard of services being delivered. Tenant scrutiny can be effective in doing this because:

- it provides a valuable reality check about the quality of services;
- it ensures tenants' experiences are routinely considered alongside other forms of performance data;
- it provides a mechanism to ensure that landlords are delivering the services tenants want, which means they can tailor their services to reflect local needs and priorities; and
- tenants can be powerful advocates for efficiency and improving VFM.

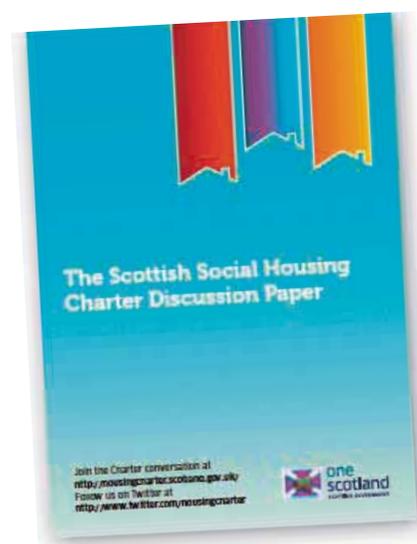
## What is influencing change?

Several factors serve as a motivation for tenant scrutiny. These are outlined below.

### Scottish Social Housing Charter and regulatory regime

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter (The Charter). This provides a set of standards and outcomes which should be delivered to all social housing tenants, wherever they live. It focuses landlord activity on services that are important to tenants and other customers, and encourages a culture of involving service users in the design, delivery and performance of services. To ensure this succeeds, tenants are given the power to work in partnership with their landlords to monitor and challenge decisions and performance.

The Act also introduced a new regulatory regime in 2012 by establishing an independent regulatory body – the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). Its sole statutory objective is to safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants, people who are or may become homeless, and other housing service users. The regulatory regime includes tenant involvement in landlords' self-assessment of services, giving tenants an enhanced role in scrutinising landlord performance and enabling them to compare with other landlords. Landlords are also required to inform their tenants and other customers on how they're performing against the Charter outcomes, through annual reports.



### Improving organisational efficiency and VFM

The Charter's VFM requirements have placed increased emphasis on a long-standing regulatory expectation, which is to demonstrate continuous improvement. Since scrutiny is ultimately about continuous improvement, it has an important role to play in achieving VFM in services.

Typically, VFM activity includes:

- **doing the right things** – improving current services and developing new ones based on an understanding of what tenants and other customers want, within locally agreed policies and service standards;
- **doing things right** – delivering more cost-effective services by getting the processes and systems right; and
- **driving down costs** – by making sure the approach to organisational structures, procurement and contract management is right.

Being efficient is only half the equation in VFM; there is little value in 'doing things right' if they happen to be the 'wrong things'. The Charter provides an excellent starting point for understanding the 'right things', as it's based on extensive consultation with tenants and other customers on what is important to them.

The SHR sets out high-level VFM expectations, but it's up to landlords and their tenants and other customers to determine what this means in practice, as part of their dialogue on Charter performance, rent setting and spending on key services.

## Improving customer satisfaction

Tenant satisfaction has for a long time been a key indicator of a housing provider's success. Knowing what customers want makes it possible for businesses to tailor everything they do to providing the right services. Tenant scrutiny can provide a mechanism to identify, assess and measure service performance in terms of delivery, timeliness, staff approach and attitude. An effective scrutiny process is also reliant on the provision of accessible, relevant and comprehensive information.

## Responding to a diverse range of customer needs and expectations

Putting tenant priorities at the heart of business and project planning, service design and review can help a housing provider deliver services that genuinely meet the needs and aspirations of its customers. To do this effectively, providers need to have in place effective approaches to understand and respond to the needs and wants of diverse customers. In addition to other tenant participation activities, tenant scrutiny has an important role to play in delivering the following objectives:

- **Objective 1:** To support better tenant engagement and empowerment;
- **Objective 2:** To ensure effective and efficient governance;
- **Objective 3:** To review and challenge performance, identifying options for service improvements and efficiencies; and
- **Objective 4:** To provide better outcomes and standards for tenants and other customers.

The remainder of this practice guide looks at these objectives in more detail.



## 2. What are others doing?

This section demonstrates in more detail how organisations have used effective tenant scrutiny arrangements to deliver against key objectives.

### Objective 1: To support tenant engagement and empowerment

#### Improving customer satisfaction

The Charter reinforces the statutory requirement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 on landlords to actively develop and support tenant participation. The required outcome is that *“tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decisions at a level they feel comfortable with”*<sup>1</sup>.

The Charter outcomes on setting rents and service charges also emphasise the importance of consulting customers on the level of service they get for their rent. Housing providers are expected to provide transparent information on service costs, which creates a more meaningful dialogue between landlords and their tenants and other customers than a simple consultation on preferences.

#### Tenant scrutiny:

- **supports** the efforts of involved tenants among the wider tenant body and helps them to gather feedback on tenants’ needs and aspirations;
- **collects** and analyses a range of performance information and feedback from different sources;
- **evaluates** the effectiveness of relationships with third parties, such as contractors and other local service providers; and
- **develops** the skills, capacity and knowledge of individual tenants and other customers involved in scrutiny.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2012/03/2602>

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## Recruiting tenants

One of the key considerations when establishing tenant scrutiny arrangements is how to recruit tenants. Landlords will already have a variety of ways to let tenants know about opportunities for involvement, such as newsletters, through Registered Tenants Organisations (RTOs), social media and conferences or meetings, and these should be clearly set out in their tenant participation strategy.

Some landlords use the introduction of scrutiny activities as an opportunity to encourage tenants with no previous involvement in participation to get involved. This can bring new and fresh perspectives. New tenants will, however, need training and support so they have a clear understanding of how landlord services are delivered, their legal obligations, and costs. Training and support should be provided for all tenants taking part in scrutiny activities at the very start of the process.

There is no hard or fast rule about whether tenants who are already involved in tenant participation activities, such as RTOs or review groups, should also be involved in scrutiny activities. Having tenants involved in both could, however, help to ensure that there is good communication and understanding of the roles between different groups and activities. It also means that tenants who are experienced in working with the landlord on policy reviews and service standards are involved in scrutiny from the outset, so can help support tenants getting involved for the first time.

Where tenants taking part in scrutiny activities are involved in other forms of participation, especially forums or groups, the distinction between scrutiny and other forms of participation should be made clear. This should avoid any potential conflicts of interest arising or confusion over the different roles that an individual may have.

Where possible, recruitment should be regular and ongoing to ensure there are enough tenants to undertake scrutiny work. Those who are more experienced can be encouraged to get involved in the training of new tenants.

Publicity and recruitment for tenant scrutineers should include a role specification, an estimate of the likely time commitment, the training and support which will be given, and how reasonable expenses will be covered. Most importantly, it should stress that this isn't a one off activity but a longer term commitment.



## Irvine Housing Association – Scrutiny panel

Irvine Housing Association (Irvine HA), part of the Riverside Group, set up a scrutiny panel and four quality groups in 2013. Each quality group took responsibility for monitoring the association's performance against specific Charter outcomes, overseen by a scrutiny panel. Irvine HA has promoted membership of the groups through its website, newsletters and conferences, as well as 'Count Me In', which is a panel of over 100 interested tenants. Staff also explained the role of the quality groups to local tenants' and residents' associations and invited them to nominate members to join the groups.

Around 30 people embarked on training sessions, including the Scottish Government's SU2S training programme. Everyone taking part was also given the opportunity to undertake the CIH Level 3 Award in Resident Scrutiny qualification.

After the first full year, Irvine HA asked HouseMark Scotland to carry out an independent review and evaluation of the groups. This evaluation recommended joining up the quality groups with the scrutiny panel, and these have since merged.

Irvine HA has used some innovative ways to recruit new members. Following a focus group with young people, it decided to use a 'chips and chat' approach that involved using a chip van to entice people to come and talk. The 'chinwag' bus used by the tenant and residents' federation has also been out and about in the community. Equipped with laptops and other IT, the bus can be adapted so that it provides whatever is needed to engage with tenants. Contact cards are readily available for tenants to complete and at least two tenants have won iPads in a prize draw for giving their contact details.

[www.irvineha.co.uk](http://www.irvineha.co.uk)



## North Ayrshire Council – Scrutiny inspections

North Ayrshire Council has developed the North Ayrshire Inspection Panel to formally carry out scrutiny inspections. This constituted group enables tenant representatives and other customers to come together to inspect services, identify areas for improvement and highlight good practice.

The tenant participation team recruited tenants for scrutiny inspections through the tenants' newsletter and local radio. The team also followed up previous expressions of interest in tenant participation. Together, these generated a good response and future recruitment will build on these methods, while including 'taster' sessions for prospective new members.

### **Inspections topics are selected according to the following criteria:**

- areas of interest to the network;
- referrals for scrutiny by the Council's service improvement groups;
- topics put forward by Council staff; and
- any service area with a significant number of complaints.

To ease the panel into the inspection process, tenant participation was chosen as a pilot. The panel then reviewed performance information for different services. This led them to decide on allocations and, specifically, refusal of offers of accommodation for their first formal inspection. Following inspection, the panel's final report was submitted to the senior management team. It was also discussed with the business plan working group and North Ayrshire Network. A report was given to all tenants via the newsletter. All the panel's recommendations have been taken on board by the Council. The panel have recently completed complaints and are ready to explore their next inspection subject.

### **The panel has identified the following learning outcomes:**

- Meeting other scrutiny groups to share experiences and learn from each other would be beneficial.
- Some administrative support is required, such as a member of staff to take minutes of meetings.
- Undertaking training, including the SU2S programme, has helped the panel to develop the knowledge and expertise to fulfil its role.

### **What resources did it require?**

- Tenants who have never been involved before have been encouraged to take part in the inspection panel. As a result, additional support and training has been provided.
- The Council invested in the CIH Level 3 Award in Resident Scrutiny qualification for all inspection panel members and tenant participation staff.
- To remain impartial and independent, an independent adviser was appointed to assist the panel through the inspection process.
- The main challenge for the Council remains the recruitment of new people and ensuring a wider representation of tenants.

### **What did it achieve?**

Since introducing scrutiny arrangements, there has been improved accountability through the work of tenant inspectors in examining services in detail. The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Scotland commended the approach by the panel when awarding a gold accreditation for 'customer involvement and scrutiny'. The Tenant Information Service (TIS) further endorsed this approach by awarding the Council a gold accreditation for its scrutiny framework.

[www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## Osprey Group – Scrutiny panel

The Osprey Group incorporates Osprey Housing (formerly Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership) and Osprey Housing Moray (formerly Moray Housing Partnership). Osprey Tenants and Residents Association (OTRA) was formerly known as Moray and Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership Tenants Association (MAHPTA).



MAHPTA took part in the 'early adopters' phase of the SU2S programme. From the outset, it took the view that scrutiny needed to be tenant-led and independent, and that if this wasn't the case, scrutiny might simply become a meaningless box ticking exercise.

Taking this into account, it was agreed with Osprey Group that:

- the scrutiny of any service would be decided by MAHPTA;
- the panel would hold the budget for its own training and support, underlining its independence from the landlord and the ability to determine its own support needs;
- no area of service delivery would be out of bounds to scrutiny;
- there would be 'buy in' from governing body members and all staff from the outset; and
- openness, transparency and trust were essential for success.

From satisfaction survey findings, MAHPTA identified that the top priorities for tenants were repairs and maintenance, as well as the quality of their homes. The panel decided this would be the subject of their first scrutiny project. It wanted to determine the answers to three key questions:

- How good are the services?
- How well is the repairs service being managed?
- Does the service meet the repairs and maintenance requirements of the Charter?

## Scrutiny activities were structured around four themes:

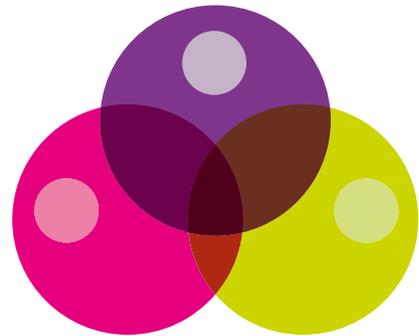
- landlord performance;
- contractor performance;
- cost of the service; and
- tenants' experience of the service.

## Key learnings:

- Response repairs was a demanding and complex service area to tackle for a first scrutiny project. This had resource implications for both the panel and the staff team.
- Careful thought is required about the information provided to tenants at the planning stage. More of the right information would have helped the group better scope their work.
- Scrutiny work is demanding and reliant on a small group of active participants. Be careful to avoid burnout by not overloading individuals and the group as a whole.
- Landlords should work with the wider staff team to help them develop their understanding of the relationship between their roles, scrutiny and delivering Charter outcomes.
- When recruiting service delivery staff, Osprey Housing now includes scrutiny-related scenarios as part of the interview process. The job descriptions for these roles also set out expectations in respect of scrutiny. The emphasis on scrutiny continues through the induction process, with new staff receiving scrutiny training.



[www.ospreyhousing.org.uk](http://www.ospreyhousing.org.uk)



## Hillcrest Housing Association – Tenant-led inspections

Hillcrest Housing Association (Hillcrest HA) responded to the requirements of the Charter by undertaking a major publicity campaign to inform tenants and other customers about plans to develop a scrutiny framework. Advertised on Hillcrest HA's website and social media channels, and through word of mouth at events such as tenants' meetings, it was also promoted by frontline housing staff.

A total of 15 tenants were involved in the first inspection in 2014. Externally facilitated training sessions were held for staff and tenants. These joint training sessions made it clear that tenant-led inspections are about improving customer service and highlighted the benefits of scrutiny so that staff understood and felt comfortable with the process.

The training included staff and tenants developing a code of conduct. This volunteer agreement, as it's called, sets out the level of conduct and behaviour that is expected of those taking part so that any issues that arise can be dealt with fairly and quickly. Hillcrest HA also asked tenant inspectors to go through a basic Disclosure Scotland process, as inspections could involve them visiting other tenants in their homes.

Tenants chose their scrutiny topic without any influence from staff and decided on the letting standard. The inspection has been a positive process for staff and tenants alike, with 31 of the 32 recommendations from tenants being agreed for action by the Governing Board. Hillcrest HA now has a new letting standard – a cleaning specification – which, for the first time, has had input from tenants. Hillcrest HA has also improved how it uses feedback about the standard of empty properties.

[www.hillcrest.org.uk](http://www.hillcrest.org.uk)

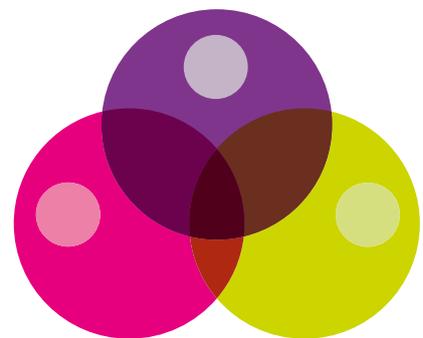


## Perth and Kinross Council – Service User Review and Evaluation

Perth and Kinross Council views tenant scrutiny of services as having a major impact on improving service delivery. It also helps officers and councillors to make the right decisions about future services.

The Service User Review and Evaluation (SURE) Team has carried out detailed scrutiny of three areas of the housing service: the handling of housing complaints, communications with the repairs service and reviewing and preventing anti-social behaviour in the Council housing areas. It has presented a detailed report on each and provided a number of recommendations for improvement. These recommendations have been accepted by the Council's housing managers, who have since developed a plan to implement the actions. The team has also assessed the performance of housing services in the annual report, which was distributed to all 7,400 of the Council's tenants. This highlighted the progress being made by council services on delivering the Charter outcomes.

[www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk)



## Objective 2: To ensure effective and efficient governance

Tenant scrutiny can support effective governance, and tenants can play a key role in shaping the strategic direction that an organisation takes. This can help to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between new business aspirations and 'getting the basics right' for existing tenants in terms of current service delivery.

Business and other plans can, for example, be subject to tenant scrutiny as part of formal governance arrangements, where the scrutiny is completely independent from the governing body or executive. This can include input to budget setting, development of corporate plans, and reviews of the organisation's vision and values. This approach can help organisations to demonstrate the robustness of their decision-making process.

Tenant scrutiny can also play a part in broader assessment and review. For example, tenants could be involved in a review of Governing Board performance or the robustness of performance monitoring arrangements. Local authorities and housing associations differ in their governance arrangements, but the examples below show how scrutiny can have an impact in both.

### River Clyde Homes – Customer Senate

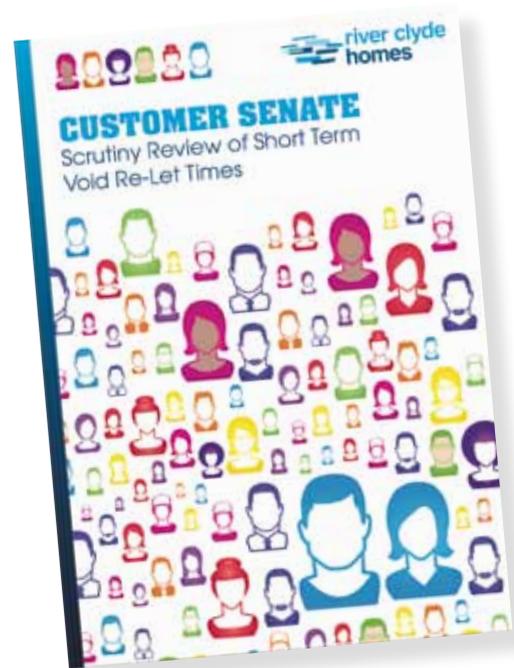
River Clyde Homes (RCH) already has a long history of tenant participation and at one stage supported 28 RTOs. Keen to explore new ways to involve more customers, RCH volunteered to take part in the Scottish Government SU2S 'early adopters' programme.

RCH agreed that the scrutiny group's remit would be totally unrestricted. The scrutiny group, which chose to call itself the Customer Senate, is supported by customer involvement and governance staff. To ensure scrutiny members meet the high standards expected of the Governing Board, the association's code of conduct was revised to include the Senate. Members of the executive management team are in regular contact with the Customer Senate to underline RCH's commitment.

The first area chosen for scrutiny was short-term void turnaround times, as a review of performance data showed that other landlords' were faster. Senate members met with managers of the relevant department to explain the scope of the scrutiny exercise so that they knew what to expect. Joint training with managers, staff and board members meant that all parties were comfortable about asking or being asked difficult questions.

## Methods used in the scrutiny exercise included:

- small group sessions to compare other landlords' lettable standards with RCH's;
- visiting best performing landlords and viewing a selection of their void properties;
- manager questionnaires;
- question and answer sessions with operational managers;
- visits to various RCH void properties;
- reviewing records of reasons for letting refusals; and
- a session to review lettings termination documents.



Senate members presented the findings directly to the Governing Board, which included 13 recommendations for improvement. All were accepted by the board and an action plan drawn up to implement them, which is being monitored by the board's performance and services sub-committee. The board also agreed to Senate representation at committee meetings when the action plan is on the agenda.

## Outcomes:

Implementation of the Customer Senate's recommendations, along with an additional internal process review, are making a difference. There has been a significant reduction in the average length of time taken to re-let high demand properties (ie short-term voids) from 85 days at the end of March 2015 to just 48 days at the end of March 2016. A full report, including further detail on the methodology and recommendations, is available on RCH's website at <https://tinyurl.com/zed3bj9> from tenants.

[www.riverclydehomes.org.uk](http://www.riverclydehomes.org.uk)

## Link Group – Link’s Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Link reviewed its tenant participation structures to take account of the requirements of the Charter. It already had a well-established tenant-led inspection group; this didn’t have the status and powers to influence the governance of the organisation. Link decided to set up a more formal structure - Link’s Tenant Scrutiny Panel (the Panel). A formal Terms of Reference was developed in partnership with tenants, staff and Board to set out the roles, powers and support for



scrutiny activity. Panel members come from a broad geographical area and recruitment is carried out at least every two years to refresh the membership with new skills.

Capacity building sessions were delivered through the SU2S training programme. The Panel currently carries out one in-depth scrutiny exercise each year. The scrutiny process is led by the tenants and they decide the scope and topics. They also agree the research methods, timescales and work plans, with support from Link’s tenant engagement officer and managers.

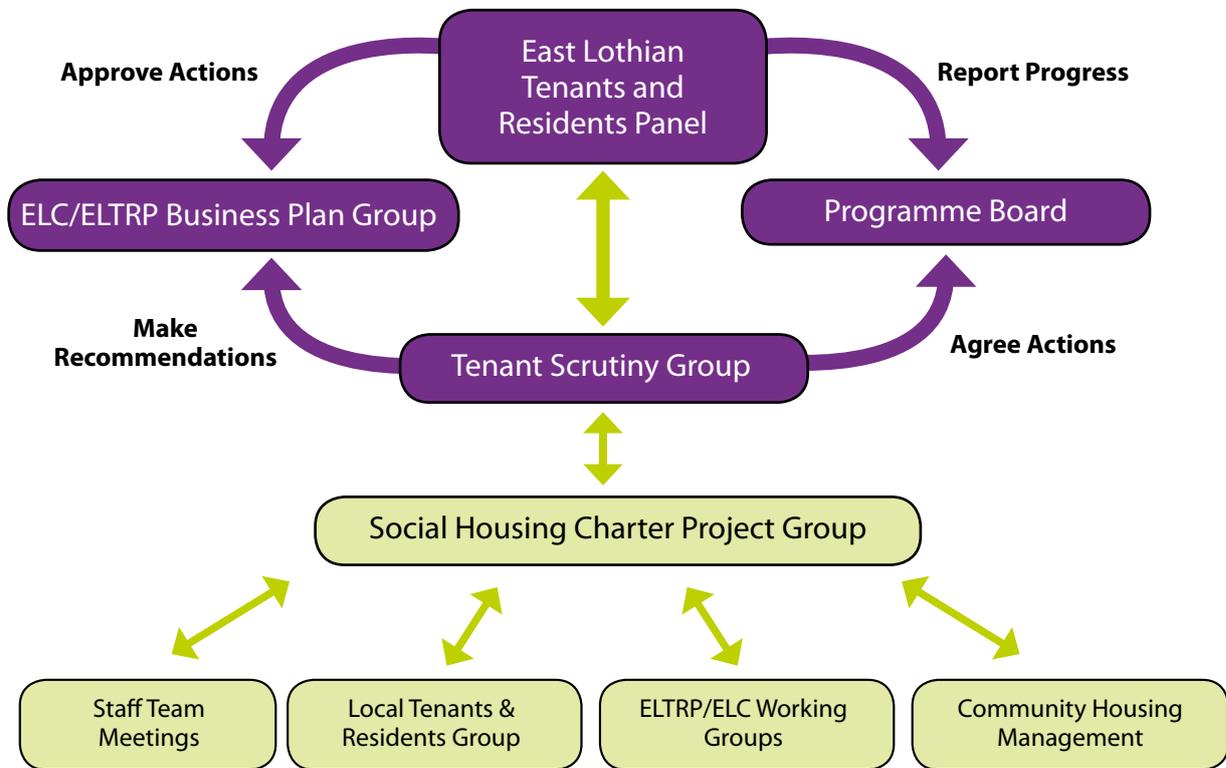
Link Group Ltd. is the RSL, with Link Housing Association (LHA) providing housing management services. The work of the Panel is integrated into the governance and performance management functions. The Panel chair has the same status as the chair of Link Group and Link HA, which helps the Panel feel valued and respected. The work of the Panel is an item on every LHA board agenda and a representative attends each meeting to feedback. Final recommendations on improving the performance of services are submitted to senior managers and the relevant Link Board and recommendations monitored every six months.

[www.linkhousing.org.uk](http://www.linkhousing.org.uk)

# East Lothian Council – Scrutiny framework

East Lothian Council has been developing scrutiny activities in partnership with East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP) since 2014. Reviews led by ELTRP have been focused on service-specific scrutiny activities. Scrutiny is tenant-led and a tenant scrutiny framework has been developed.

## Our Scrutiny Framework



### Some examples of scrutiny activities to date are:

- tenants' independent grassroots scrutiny – this involved a review of estate inspections with a number of recommendations for improvement;
- mystery shopping pilot – focused on communications with the Council and resulted in changes being made to the Council's automated telephone system;
- desktop audit – an audit of the public information that the Council publishes on its allocations policy, which resulted in improved information on the Council's website and clearer leaflets;
- anti-social behaviour (ASB) survey – to find out how ASB management processes work in practice; and
- sign-up process including shadowing housing officer.

All recommendations were taken on board by the Council, with some included in its ASB strategy, including changes to local targets.

ELTRP is now working on a scrutiny review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The group is being trained on budgets to help them undertake this work and is also working on a plan for consultation with tenants.

[www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk)  
[www.eltrp.co.uk](http://www.eltrp.co.uk)

## Objective 3: To review and challenge performance, identifying options for service improvements and efficiencies

A tenant scrutiny panel can act as a 'critical friend' by analysing, questioning and challenging landlord performance as part of a constructive and structured approach to continuous improvement. A scrutiny panel can also 'reality check' service delivery, assuring managers that services are 'fit for purpose' from the perspective of those that use them.

Scrutiny can either look at a particular service or function, called single service scrutiny, or at a landlord's overall performance, across all service areas, on a regular and structured basis. In this case, scrutiny is comparing performance against the previous reporting period, looking at trends and identifying areas for further investigation and improvement.

At its heart, scrutiny looks in detail at the way services are delivered and experienced by tenants with a view to identifying improvements. Where tenant scrutiny results in real changes in the service experience of tenants, this can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction and improved VFM.

### **Link Group – Link's Tenant Scrutiny Panel, influencing service improvement**

The Panel's work has achieved a number of improvements to services and positive outcomes for tenants. Its reports provide objective evidence of customers' experiences and make challenging recommendations.

#### **Its aim is to:**

- influence change and improvement;
- focus decisions on getting VFM for tenants; and
- cut waste in service processes.

An example of this was the Panel's assessment of the performance of Link's gas servicing contractor.

#### **The Panel chose gas servicing to:**

- validate customer satisfaction figures (the contractor reported 100% satisfaction, which was the performance indicator for board reports);
- assess VFM; and
- because it's a legal safety requirement for all tenants to allow access.

The Panel identified that nearly a third of tenants don't allow access at the first appointment. The cost of tenants withholding access is built into the contract cost and the Panel's aim was to investigate how access to properties could be improved.

If this could be done, it could be built into future contract negotiation, ultimately helping achieve better VFM for the rents tenants pay.

The Panel assesses VFM by considering cost, performance, benchmarking and satisfaction. The Panel made 12 recommendations which were approved by the Link Group Board.

**Positive outcomes for tenants included:**

- improved communication materials, letters and consistent contractor branding;
- reduced complaints: 5% reduction in successful access at second visit;
- gas reconnection for new tenants – service standard improved;
- improved monitoring of the reasons why tenants refuse access and earlier involvement of housing officers to help identify and support vulnerable tenants;
- improved monitoring and validation of contractor customer satisfaction figures; and
- changed performance indicators and targets set for gas serviced at first appointment.

[www.linkhousing.org.uk](http://www.linkhousing.org.uk)

**Osprey Group – Costs of scrutiny**

Osprey Group has quantified the costs of scrutiny activities.

**To date, scrutiny work has cost:**

• responsive repairs	£2,600
• corporate governance	£1,300
• voids and lettable standards	£3,450
• monitoring performance	£1,650
• mystery shopping	£1,250
Total cost for scrutiny over two years	£10,250
Total cost for scrutiny per week	£98.56
Total cost for scrutiny per property per week	6.5p



**Benefits and achievements include:**

- a valued assessment of the current state of service, with concise and appropriate recommendations for improvement;
- implementation of the resulting improvement action has delivered demonstrable improvement;
- scrutiny is seen as a continuous tenant audit of services, performance and VFM – “it keeps us on our toes”;
- MAHPTA and the scrutiny panel also undertake short, sharp mystery shops informed by SHR thematic studies;
- better communication between staff and tenants;
- the panel’s use of the Charter as a ‘tenants’ bible’ has helped embed the regulatory framework and scrutiny into Osprey Group’s approach to governance and performance management;
- it has helped embed a culture of enhanced involvement and effective tenant scrutiny throughout the organisation – from the executive to the frontline – and within the governance arrangements; and
- tenants with experience of scrutiny now provide peer support to other tenants, enabling them to challenge and hold Osprey Group to account for performance.

**Benefits for the tenants involved in scrutiny include:**

- a better understanding of organisational and financial limitations;
- opportunities to develop new knowledge and skills;
- a good understanding of the Charter and how this is woven into the fabric of scrutiny work; and
- an appreciation of the interests of tenants can be better served as a result of scrutiny.

As part of the scrutiny process, there will be an annual review of the overall progress made against the scrutiny panel’s recommendations. Particular emphasis will be placed on the scope and impact of the improvements that Osprey Group has implemented.

[www.ospreyhousing.org.uk](http://www.ospreyhousing.org.uk)

## East Ayrshire Council – Scrutiny activities

East Ayrshire Tenants and Residents Federation (EATRF) leads on the scrutiny work undertaken in the local authority area. Scrutiny topics are agreed in partnership with the Council based on areas of interest, performance data and the Council's Annual Return on the Charter.

### Tenant scrutiny activities included:

#### Allocations

The timescales for housing allocations and the length of time properties were empty varied across the authority, affecting re-let performance targets and void rent loss figures.

The scrutiny exercise resulted in a number of positive outcomes, including:

- the provision of staff training to ensure consistency across all offices;
- a specialist housing access point within the main housing office;
- improved information for housing applicants; and
- support and assistance to applicants when completing housing application forms.

#### Challenges

In some cases, recommendations by the scrutiny group can't be taken forward. When this happens, officers will meet with the scrutiny group to explain in detail why this is. It may, for example, be because legislation restricts the Council from entering a tenant's home to carry out works.

Sometimes, recommendations would incur additional costs which could have a detrimental effect overall. One example of this was where the scrutiny group proposed that vinyl or tiled flooring should be included as standard in a new bathroom specification. Officers explained that the additional costs incurred would reduce the overall number of new bathrooms that could be installed. A compromise of installing new floorboards in the bathroom specification was reached. These would provide level flooring, onto which tenants could apply their own floor coverings.

Initially, it took longer for the Council to feed back to the scrutiny group than expected. Timescales have now been agreed and included in the joint Council/EATRF code of practice.

Future scrutiny exercises are planned to review the housing options and homelessness services, as well as the HRA.

### Key learning points:

- Tenants and staff understand their respective roles.
- Ongoing training and information sessions are essential.
- Terms of reference and a code of conduct should be developed for scrutiny group members to sign up to.
- Tenants and staff must listen to each other, and take on board new ideas.
- Agree timescales for feeding back to the scrutiny group on their report and include these in agreed code of practice.
- An understanding of performance information, the HRA and related budget is essential (tenants will require support with this).
- When it works well, participation in scrutiny activities increases tenant skills, confidence and knowledge.

[www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk) [www.eatrf.org.uk](http://www.eatrf.org.uk)

## Objective 4: To provide better outcomes and standards for tenants and other customers

Tenant scrutiny offers a structured approach to enable landlords to learn from the experiences and aspirations of their tenants, and to deliver the services tenants want in the way that they want them.

### **Irvine Housing Association – Scrutiny panel**

When reviewing customer services, the first thing that the scrutiny panel recommended changing was the unwelcoming reception area. The panel helped to redesign the space, which now includes a play area and a new meeting room accessed from reception.

The panel then identified that a large number of repairs were being reported soon after tenants had moved into their properties. As a result, tenants had to make themselves available for different contractors to call. Irvine HA worked with its main contractors to come up with a solution and is now piloting a new 'safe, clean and clear' standard at point of allocation. Tenants are asked to note any non-urgent repairs when they move in and report them within two weeks. This allows the contractor to co-ordinate the various tradespeople, minimising the number of appointments required to complete the repairs. The pilot should also achieve better VFM in the longer term, by reducing the number of visits required.

[www.irvineha.co.uk](http://www.irvineha.co.uk)



## Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership – Scrutiny panel

Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership's (DGHP's) scrutiny panel currently consists of five tenant members. Additional recruitment to the panel is a focus for the coming year ahead. DGHP intends to use the SU2S training toolkit to deliver training to new and existing members, to reinforce the importance of the scrutiny process.

To date, the scrutiny panel has undertaken three scrutiny exercises. One of these was to inspect the performance of one of DGHP's main repairs and maintenance contractors. The scrutiny exercise focused on communication with tenants, how well the appointment system was working, and processes around cancelled and rescheduled jobs.

### The scrutiny panel:

- reviewed performance data;
- shadowed tradesmen;
- questioned staff; and
- visited the customer service centre.

Recommendations were then presented by scrutiny panel members to DGHP's board of management. As a result, the decision was made to discontinue an arrangement whereby the contractor was providing an out-of-hours service for DGHP, as this didn't appear to be providing an improved service to customers.

The panel also identified that there was no process in place to monitor sub-contractors that the main contractors were using. This has been reviewed, and an improved process implemented. Another recommendation was to create a resolutions officer as part of the customer service centre team. This staff member resolves any 'on the spot' issues by liaising directly with the contractor. The success of this approach has resulted in the post becoming a full time position, resolving first time complaints at the point of contact.

[www.dghp.org.uk](http://www.dghp.org.uk)



## Viewpoint Housing Association – Service Improvement Group

Viewpoint Housing Association's Service Improvement Group undertook a review of repairs and maintenance. This included:

- a review of policy, processes and procedures;
- a desktop audit of repairs information;
- splitting into three groups to reality check day-to-day repairs, voids, planned and cyclical maintenance;
- work shadowing, interviews, meetings and presentations with staff and contractors;
- inspection visits to void properties; and
- visiting the premises of the main contractor.

Tenants were kept updated with progress through newsletter articles.

Independent training, information and advice helped the Service Improvement Group to develop expertise, complete tasks, prioritise and determine the outcomes.

### Outcomes:

- improved process for appointments;
- better contractor performance as a result of improved tenant communication;
- training given to tenants on differences between cyclical and planned works;
- increased tenant involvement in procurement of new contractors; and
- VFM – achieved through energy efficiency in lettable standards, and savings on call out costs due to reduced doubling up of works.

[www.viewpoint.org.uk](http://www.viewpoint.org.uk)



### 3. How do you make sure you get it right?

This section sets out some of the key considerations when developing or reviewing your approach to tenant scrutiny. Before you introduce tenant scrutiny arrangements, you should be clear on the points set out below.

#### What do you want tenant scrutiny to achieve?

This question is key because it will influence:

- the kind of scrutiny structures which are developed and how these fit with current organisational structures and decision-making processes; and
- the skills, attributes and knowledge needed by those involved in scrutiny activity and the training required to support this. This includes not just tenants and other customers but also staff, councillors and board members.

#### How can you ensure that your scrutiny arrangements are accessible, representative and inclusive?

Tenant scrutiny arrangements should make it easy for anyone who wants to get involved to do so. A challenge for many organisations is to secure involvement that reflects the diversity of the tenant population. For this reason:

- The selection of those involved in scrutiny activity should take account of equality and diversity.
- There should be an emphasis on making all tenants aware of what scrutiny is and how to get involved. Some landlords have produced a guide to tenant scrutiny which explains what scrutiny is, how it works, what is involved, what it can achieve and how to get involved.
- While those involved in scrutiny are volunteers, as with all other tenant participation activities, all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses should be covered. For example, travel costs, childcare and carer costs should be routinely covered as a way of reducing barriers to involvement and ensuring tenants aren't out of pocket.
- While not a replacement for face-to-face contact, some landlords use interactive approaches such as skype or video conferencing for tenants involved in scrutiny. This can help reduce travel and physical attendance at meetings, where this may not always be possible or practical.
- The Scottish Government's Guide to Successful Tenant Participation<sup>2</sup> provides a comprehensive account of all the practicalities associated with involvement.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/16342/tp/improving/SuccessfulTPanalysis-2015>

You should also consider the following questions before you embark on scrutiny activities:

#### **Have you identified clear roles, responsibilities and terms of reference?**

All those involved, including tenants, staff, councillors and members of RSL governing bodies must be involved in the process of establishing roles, responsibilities and terms of reference.

Clarity is required to:

- ensure that everybody understands the overall purpose of the activities they will be undertaking and what their roles are within those activities; and
- provide a focus for the training, development, mentoring, communications or administrative support which the organisation may need to put in place to support those involved in scrutiny, including a policy on expenses.

It's essential to have terms of reference and a code of conduct in place for those involved in scrutiny work which will govern the way scrutiny activity is undertaken. This will:

- strengthen the credibility of the group and enhance the confidence of others, including staff, governing bodies and tenants; and
- embed scrutiny as a core component of the approach to governance, operational management and tenant involvement.

**A code of conduct** could include:

- the qualities required of those involved in scrutiny: for example, objectivity, not furthering a personal agenda, accountability, honesty and integrity, transparency and openness, and leadership;
- declarations of any conflicts of interest which might compromise objectivity; and
- expected conduct: for example, time commitment, making a contribution, willingness to work through conflict and maintaining positive relationships, confidentiality, and financial probity.

**Terms of reference** could include:

- a statement of the purpose of scrutiny activity;
- a definition of activities to be undertaken by those involved in scrutiny;
- policy for those involved in scrutiny, including exclusions to the process (for example, existing board members or staff members);
- length of time it's possible to serve on a scrutiny panel or similar formal arrangement if such an approach is adopted;
- equality and diversity information;
- working with other performance management, quality assurance, regulatory and governance structures within the organisation; and
- an approach to monitoring and review.

## How will you develop skills and support capacity building across the organisation?

Those undertaking scrutiny must be supported and have the appropriate skills and knowledge. This applies to staff, board members and councillors as well as tenants. This will mean that organisations have to invest in the training, development and mentoring of the tenants, staff and governing body members involved.

**Tenants** will need support to:

- understand housing jargon and the technical, regulatory and constitutional elements which relate to the governance and management of a business;
- develop inter-personal skills so they can interact confidently and effectively with service managers, senior staff and governing body members;
- develop group working skills so they can operate constructively with each other and manage internal conflict; and
- network with other tenant scrutiny groups and associated tenant bodies to enable fresh ideas and learning to be brought into the organisation.

**Staff, board members and councillors** will need support to:

- understand what scrutiny is trying to achieve and why it's useful and important to the organisation;
- understand the scope and form of scrutiny activity and how it relates to their day-to-day work, for example in terms of providing information to inform scrutiny work and implementing the recommendations that come out of such activity; and
- overcome any concerns or misunderstandings they may have. Joint training with tenants can help foster joint understanding.

## How are you going to resource scrutiny activities?

Tenant scrutiny can't be effective unless it's adequately resourced - this should be agreed and built in at the planning stage. Resourcing includes considering a number of key questions:

- Who is going to support the scrutiny activities and be a staff link between the panel/group and the landlord? How much support should that officer provide?
- Will there be a separate budget for scrutiny or will it be part of the current tenant participation budget? A budget will need to cover all aspects of scrutiny including training, meetings, IT access, travel expenses, childcare costs, attendance at external events, etc.
- How will the organisation ensure all scrutiny group members can access information? For example, do all members have access to information online?
- What will be the benefits for those involved? For example, these might include gaining new skills and experience, widening social networks, certification of skills and experience as part of improving employability.
- Tenants may need or want training in areas such as report writing, presentation skills, etc. How will training and support needs be identified and how will skills development be provided?

- Will there be review and discussion within the scrutiny group about how effective it has been in its role? How would this be structured? How formal would it be? Would it include setting goals for the following year?

### Scope and volume of scrutiny activity

The level of scrutiny activity undertaken each year is also linked to capacity and resources. As can be seen from some of the earlier examples, scrutiny activities can be very resource intensive and, especially initially, a cautious approach is likely to work best in terms of overall workload for both tenants and staff. Some scrutiny groups have looked at four service areas over a year, whereas others have focused on one. The level of activity undertaken will often depend on the size and capacity of scrutiny group members and the area of service being scrutinised, and should be agreed by the group itself.

Staff capacity and resources must also be taken into account. How much and what kind of information staff will be asked to provide for any scrutiny activity should be identified at the outset, with the emphasis on being as open as possible. In many cases information and data will already be available as part of the landlord's normal performance monitoring arrangements.

The type of scrutiny exercise should also be taken into account. Is it service-specific or regular and systematic scrutiny of a landlord's performance across all activities linked to the Charter outcomes?

### How can you make sure you maintain the momentum?

Clear timescales for completion of scrutiny exercises should be agreed. Other ways of maintaining the momentum include:

- **Keeping it fresh** – varying the areas being scrutinised will keep the process interesting and relevant.
- **Implementing improvements to services quickly** – organisations should ensure that recommendations made by a tenant scrutiny panel are implemented quickly. If this isn't possible, feedback and explanation should be given to the scrutiny panel. Landlords should set deadlines for implementation which are monitored and reviewed.
- **Celebrating success** – it's vital that scrutiny panel members, the Governing Board, councillors, staff and the wider tenant body can see tangible benefits to scrutiny.

## How will you measure the success of your scrutiny arrangements?

Tenant scrutiny activity should align to the Charter outcomes. The Charter's reporting arrangements provide those involved in scrutiny activity with an excellent starting point for gathering evidence and making judgements.

These include:

- Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) and the SHR's associated online *Find and Compare Landlord*<sup>3</sup> service;
- HouseMark's Charter Storyboards<sup>4</sup>;
- the landlord's own report to tenants about its performance against the Charter; and
- the SHR's regulatory judgements of landlords.

Everyone involved in scrutiny must be clear about the purpose and the intended outcome. Landlords must communicate clearly to tenants from the start what they intend to do with the results of any scrutiny work and how they will feed this back. It's also important to be clear from the outset what successful scrutiny outcomes will look like, what has already changed as a result of scrutiny and what has been achieved.

To summarise:

- **Aims** – be clear about what scrutiny is looking to achieve.
- **Objectives** – identify specific changes or improvements.
- **Actions** – plan and implement actions that will deliver each intended outcome.
- **Outcomes** – measure success by what has improved (outcomes), not which actions were undertaken (inputs).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/find-and-compare-landlords>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.housemarkbusinessintelligence.co.uk/hmscotland/social-housing-charter-data-analysis-2015>

## 4. Final thoughts

We have identified the following key conclusions to help you shape your approach to tenant scrutiny.

### **1. Be clear about the relationship and the differences between tenant scrutiny and wider tenant engagement**

Tenant scrutiny has links to other tenant participation and involvement activities and can build on these. For example, some tenants who are already involved in other groups, forums or local RTOs may wish to take part in scrutiny activities. Participation activities will often include elements of scrutiny. However, scrutiny activities involve a more detailed examination of landlord performance, using data and a focus on VFM. They should also be independent, formal and feed into governance structures and decision-making processes on the future shape and performance of services.

### **2. Get the culture right and embed scrutiny in an organisation**

Effective tenant scrutiny will require organisational buy-in from staff at all levels. This means having the right culture – a clear understanding and acceptance of tenant scrutiny by the governing body/councillors, staff and wider tenant membership. This may involve significant cultural change. Key elements to consider are set out below:

#### **Support of Governing Board members, councillors and senior staff**

– this is crucial in reinforcing the credibility of scrutiny for both staff and tenants. Tenants and others involved in scrutiny need to know that their efforts will be considered carefully and that their reports and recommendations will be taken seriously. Ideally, scrutiny reports should be presented to the Governing Board/housing committee/senior management team by the scrutiny team. This will underline the importance of the scrutiny process in making improvements and emphasise its link with governance, performance improvement and VFM.

#### **Involving staff in understanding the importance and benefits of tenant scrutiny**

– although most staff will be accustomed to being asked questions by tenants about performance, they should be involved, trained and supported to understand the specific benefits of tenant scrutiny. Their involvement in shaping the scrutiny arrangements and joint training with tenants will develop effective working relations. Keeping scrutiny on the agenda at staff team meetings, providing updates and encouraging staff to adopt a scrutiny approach towards their work will also help embed a scrutiny culture within the workplace.

#### **Ensuring tenant scrutiny arrangements are integrated with the approach to governance and performance management**

– tenant scrutiny should be part of the organisation's framework for ensuring the achievement of its objectives, notably the approaches to governance and performance management. Tenant scrutiny should relate to these decision-making frameworks but be independent of them. Similarly, the relationship of scrutiny to other forms of tenant involvement, particularly existing structures, needs to be transparent and understood. There

should also be a clear and accepted way in which scrutiny influences the setting of their strategic direction.

### **3. Refresh membership, succession planning**

As time passes there will, inevitably, be a turnover of scrutiny panel members. This can present a real challenge, particularly if panel members leave in significant numbers. To mitigate this risk, organisations should:

- have a robust process to ensure panel members have the right attributes, are clear about what is expected of them and are supported in their role;
- have procedures in place to review tenant panel membership and ensure succession planning;
- avoid appointment cycles for tenant scrutiny groups that result in the whole membership changing at once;
- have some turnover of different tenants involved in scrutiny, to keep perspectives and challenges fresh; and
- consider surveying tenants more widely to find out what might make involvement in scrutiny more attractive or why they choose not to be involved. This could be because of the regularity of the meetings, the times, the workload, or tenants may find the prospect daunting, etc. This will help with future planning.

### **4. Be positive about change**

Tenant scrutiny is a work in progress. It exists, primarily, as a means of promoting continuous improvement. It too will be subject to continuous improvement as tenants and landlords develop their approach and as the nature of service provision changes over time. It should be seen, therefore, as an evolving joint enterprise that isn't an end in itself, but rather the means to ensure better services and VFM. Accordingly, all parties need to be receptive to new ideas and prepared to change.

### **5. For tenant scrutiny to deliver meaningful outcomes for the organisation and for customers, it must have real and effective power**

Tenant scrutiny must be more than an exercise in consultation or tenant participation. Its success depends upon the ability to make an impact on the decision-making processes in an organisation. For this to happen, scrutiny must be embedded within the arrangements for performance management and governance. It must also have the necessary clout when it comes to seeking information and data to reach a position of understanding. This is likely to require a change in culture for many landlords, as it requires the sharing of power and control and a commitment to transparency. In return, landlords get invaluable insight, free consultancy and a partner in the co-production of services. If landlords and tenants are serious about making a difference, it starts here!

# Appendix

## Finding out more

### Useful publications

*Tenant Panels: Options for Accountability* – A useful guide from the National Tenant Organisations about how to set up dynamic and accountable tenant panels.

<http://nationaltenants.org/tenantpanels/>

*Resident-led self-regulation – enhancing in-house scrutiny and performance* – A joint CIH and Tenant Services Authority publication on implementing tenant-led scrutiny.

<http://bit.ly/2ktmucj>

*How to develop and monitor local performance measures* – A HouseMark publication on how to work with tenants and staff in setting local performance measures.

<http://bit.ly/1G0Hkb1>

*Tenant scrutiny: now and in the future* – A TPAS, HouseMark and CIH briefing which explains what tenant scrutiny is and illustrates how and where it's working in practice.

<http://bit.ly/2jxaQOY>

*Measuring the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes* – A CIH Scotland, SHBVN, ALACHO and HouseMark Scotland publication which helps landlords self-assess in relation to the Charter. It sets out where existing internal, public documents and benchmarking may fit in relation to the Charter outcomes.

<http://bit.ly/2jERm8W>

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## **Useful websites**

### **<http://housingcharter.scotland.gov.uk>**

All you need to know about the Scottish Social Housing Charter background and development. You can also download a copy of the Charter here.

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### **[www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk)**

Comprehensive information on the regulator and the regulation of social housing in Scotland. Includes information on the Charter, how tenants and other services should be involved and performance information from social landlords across Scotland.

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### **[www.cih.org/scotland](http://www.cih.org/scotland)**

CIH is the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. In Scotland, it works to shape housing and community agendas and supports over 2,000 members across the country.

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### **[www.housemark.co.uk](http://www.housemark.co.uk)**

HouseMark is the leading provider of social housing data and insight. It has been supporting its members to respond to change since 1999. HouseMark is jointly owned by CIH and the National Housing Federation, two not-for-profit organisations that redistribute their profits in the sector.

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### **[www.tpasscotland.org.uk](http://www.tpasscotland.org.uk)**

The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Scotland) is a national membership organisation for landlords, tenants and other related organisations. TPAS works with tenants' organisations, housing associations and local authorities.

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### **[www.tis.org.uk](http://www.tis.org.uk)**

TIS provides independent advice, support and training for tenants and landlords to get the most from tenant participation and improve service delivery.

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## About CIH

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. Our goal is simple – to provide housing professionals and their organisations with the advice, support and knowledge they need to be brilliant.

CIH is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation. This means that the money we make is put back into the organisation and funds the activities we carry out to support the housing industry. We have a diverse membership who work in both the public and private sectors, in 20 countries on five continents across the world.

Further information is available at: [www.cih.org](http://www.cih.org)



## About HouseMark Scotland

HouseMark is the leading provider of social housing data and insight. We have been supporting our members to respond to change since 1999. We're jointly owned by the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Housing Federation, two not-for-profit organisations that redistribute their profits within the social housing sector.

To find out more about our services, visit [www.housemark.co.uk](http://www.housemark.co.uk), or email [scotland@housemark.co.uk](mailto:scotland@housemark.co.uk)



# Stepping Up to Scrutiny

