

The City of Edinburgh Council's Annual Assurance Statement on Housing Services

October 2025

The City of Edinburgh Council confirms to its tenants and the Scottish Housing Regulator the areas of full compliance and partial compliance and the steps underway to address this in relation to its duties, obligations and responsibilities placed on landlords by legislation and through statutory guidance.

The Council is working towards consistently delivering the outcomes set out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and others service users.

The areas of partial compliance to this duty during the past year that are subject to ongoing monitoring and reporting have been:

Homelessness

Providing homelessness services for people who are threatened with or are experiencing homelessness continues to be a significant challenge in Edinburgh and demand for homelessness services remains high.

Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of households accommodated in temporary accommodation that breached the Unsuitable Accommodation Order, this number still remains around 1,000. In addition, the Council did not offer temporary accommodation to homeless people in all cases when it had a statutory duty to do so. There were 3,287 instances of failure to accommodate in 2024/25

Regular updates on the actions to prevent homelessness and improve homelessness services including the mix of suitable temporary accommodation are reported to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee, and monthly engagement takes place with the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Homelessness continues to be an area of engagement, with a particular focus on the provision of temporary accommodation for people who are homeless. This follows the SHR's thematic review of homelessness, published in February 2023. Statutory returns covering a range of performance measures are submitted to the Scottish Government.

Demand for homelessness services and social housing in the city has remained high, with 3,455 households assessed as homeless, or threatened with homelessness in 2024/25, similar to the previous year (3,436). As of 31 March 2025, there were 7,936 open cases where the Council has a duty to secure settled housing. This is a 11% increase from 2023/24. There were on average 291 bids for every home which became available on EdIndex in 2024/25 and as at March 2025 26,824 households were registered for EdIndex.

The Council continues to see increasing numbers of homeless presentations and an increase in the number of households accessing temporary accommodation as a result to changes in refugee and asylum policy. This has formed part of ongoing discussions with the Scottish Housing Regulator, Scottish and UK Governments over the last year. This increasing demand is putting additional pressure on services.

Tenant Safety

The safety of tenants is of utmost priority for the Council and for Housing Services. In 2024/25, through a service review of the Housing and Homelessness Service, a Tenant Safety team was established, bringing together gas, electrical, water quality, asbestos and damp and mould into one service area to bring greater focus on improvement of performance. Monthly meetings are held

with the Scottish Housing Regulator to update on progress in key areas focussing on gas, electrical and fire safety (LD2) compliance and damp and mould.

We are developing a communications strategy and will have an article in upcoming newsletters to inform tenants on health and safety aspects of their homes.

Gas safety

There was a significant improvement in compliance in gas servicing on 2024/25, with only 28 instances where the Council failed to complete servicing within 12 months; performance of 99.9%. The Regulator continues to have concerns about this level of non-compliance, and a review of procedures is being undertaken to identify any ways that this can be further improved upon.

Electrical safety

Electrical compliance has continued to present significant challenges. A data quality check carried out in late 2024 identified an error in how compliance with Electrical Installation Compliance Reports (EICRs) had been reported, resulting in compliance being reported to be higher than the actual figure. This was corrected and reported to both Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee and to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The time taken to complete each check, secure the right level of resource, and gain access to tenants' homes have all been factors that have impacted on performance in this area. However, good progress has been made in recent months, and compliance is 80.74% as of 30 June 2025. It is anticipated that there will be a high number of instances where it will be necessary to implement Force of Law Entry procedures to achieve full compliance due to the high level of access issues.

Fire safety

Compliance with fire detection installation of LD2 alarms has improved, with significant resources being allocated to achieve 100% compliance. The remaining 153 homes (31 July 2025) that are still to have LD2 alarms installed are all cases where numerous attempts to gain access have been unsuccessful and Force of Law Entry procedures have now been instigated.

Following substantial investment from the Council and a holistic approach to enhancing fire safety, there have been significant improvements to fire safety across the multi-storey blocks in 2024/25. The current multi-year fire safety improvement programme was commissioned in June 2024 and included thorough assessment of the existing conditions and preparation of Retrospective Fire Strategy Documents on the 30 blocks included in the programme. The original scope of works was revised in May 2025 to include passive fire upgrades and the installation of retrospective residential sprinkler systems. All new fire door and firestopping installations are to be fitted by a specialist contractor who holds Third Party Certification from BM TRADA. The design and installation of the retrospective residential sprinkler systems will comply with the relevant British Standards and third-party accreditation from LPCB 1301 Scheme for Residential sprinklers, an approved UKAS accreditation scheme. To date the passive fire safety improvement works are underway at 12 multi-storey blocks, with 9 nearing completion, and works due to commence on both the passive and mechanical & electrical improvements at 8 blocks before the end of the financial year.

Single Building Assessments (SBA's) are currently being commissioned, in conjunction with the Scottish Government's Cladding Remediation Directorate who have recently confirmed funding has been made available for 49 blocks (14 medium rise) and 35 high rise). These will be actioned and reported back to Scottish Government in the financial year 2025/26.

Damp and mould

The Council has made significant investment in resources dedicated to dealing with damp and mould and other preservation issues with the establishment of a substantial Preservation team.

The team aims to complete surveys within 10 working days and is performing well against this target; with the exception being in months where there is an exceptionally high demand. There has been good progress in reducing the number of open damp and mould cases and reducing the length of time taken to complete cases, although further work is still required. A review of resources required to meet the continuing high demand is being carried out. There are eight Housing Officers who work as part of this team and are dedicated to managing effective communications with tenants experiencing damp and mould.

Water safety

High risk areas of water safety have a stringent inspection and water sampling programme; this is a shared service with Corporate Property and Facilities Management. We are reviewing the risk around low rise and occupied properties, in addition to void properties where stagnant water may pose a higher risk.

Following a detailed survey of condition of existing cold water storage tanks, replacement programmes were actioned in 2024/25. Phase 1, which is approaching completion, targeted lifecycle replacement of cold-water storage tanks at seven high rise blocks deemed high priority. The works replaced existing tanks and, if required, associated pump sets to bring them up to modern standards and in line with the Councils preferred maintenance requirements. Phase 2 is due to be tendered in September 2025 with an anticipated start date in late 2025/early 2026 and will target high/medium priority tanks in 13 high rise blocks.

Asbestos

There is a full review of procedures currently underway following the organisational restructure. Asbestos refresher training for all inhouse staff has been updated and will be rolled out again, commencing October 2025. We continue to work with specialist contractors for all asbestos related works. As the current framework arrangements are in their final year, we will be working to procure a new framework in 2025/26.

Lifts

A Lift Improvement Plan is being actioned by the High Rise Management and Investment Team, with the management of lift repairs, maintenance and replacement programmes being a key focus. An in-depth survey of the existing condition of the lifts within blocks is underway; this will inform the next phase of the replacement works and the new contract for repairs and maintenance, due to be tendered in the next financial year.

Signed _____

Date of signing _____

Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron, Convenor of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee