ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF HOUSING SERVICES 2026

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

The Sustainable Development Committee confirms that in respect of housing services provided by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, we comply with the regulatory requirements as laid out in Chapter 3 of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework, to include:

- all relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter in respect of any tenants, homeless persons, and other person who are in receipt of housing services; and
- our legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equalities and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.

We confirm that we have seen and considered sufficient evidence to give us this assurance for housing and homelessness, equalities and human rights.

The Comhairle recognises the rights of Gypsy/Travellers and the responsibilities of the Authority towards them. However, we have never received a request for the provision of services to Gypsy/Travellers, and, in the absence of any evidence of demand for formal provision of services, there remains no justification for the considerable resource outlay that would be required. There are, therefore, currently no designated sites within the Outer Hebrides or plans to create any.

We have 14 homeless properties, one hostel type property with 24 rooms, and one former education property which are subject to a programme of maintenance to ensure statutory compliance against tenant and resident safety, where applicable, against the following:

- Gas safety
- Electrical safety
- Water safety
- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Damp and Mould

Of these properties, all certificates are currently up to date. At present, we are unable to confirm that we have comprehensive, good quality and up to date information on the construction, components and condition of all our properties. However, a full stock-condition survey has commenced, and completion of this survey is anticipated by the end of April 2027.

This Annual Assurance Statement was approved at the sitting of the Committee on 22 September 2026 and is signed by Councillor Donald Crichton, Chair of the Sustainable Development Committee, on behalf of the Committee.

Signature of Chair: _____

Date: _____

ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT		
Ref	SHR Regulatory Requirement / Standard	Evidence
AN1	Prepare and submit Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) by 31 October	Annual Assurance Statement 2026 was reported to Comhairle on 22 September 2026.
AN2	Notify SHR of any material changes during the year	The SHR will be notified of any material changes as soon as possible.
AN3	Have assurance and evidence of meeting legal obligations relating to: · Housing and homelessness services · Equality and human rights · Tenant and resident safety	The Comhairle complies with all relevant legal obligations relating to Homelessness. Policies relating to Homelessness are reviewed on a regular basis. Performance against Homelessness targets/obligations are reported to the Sustainable Development Committee annually, reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator as part of the Council's ARC, reported to the Care Commission as part of an annual return and a self-assessment exercise, and the Scottish Government are updated on Homelessness statistics on a quarterly basis.
AN3	Each landlord must have assurance and evidence that it is meeting all of its legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.	In relation to: • Gas safety • Electrical safety • Water safety • Fire safety • Asbestos • Damp and Mould • Lift Safety n/a FIT – Certificates in place for all properties. Calorifier - in place for all properties. TMV in place for all properties, as required. PAT completed for all properties, as required. Gas Boiler Service/Maintenance – complete in all applicable properties. Emergency Lights – complete in all applicable properties. Fire Appliances – complete in all applicable properties. Legionella RA – complete in all properties. Fire Alarm – certificate in place in all applicable properties. Interlinked

ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT		
Ref	SHR Regulatory Requirement / Standard	Evidence
		smoke/heat alarms in place in all units, and carbon monoxide detector where applicable.
AN4	Notify SHR of any tenant or resident safety matters reported to or being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).	The SHR will be notified should any issues arise.
AN4	Notify the SHR of any reports from statutory or regulatory authorities or insurance providers relating to safety concerns.	The SHR will be notified should any issues arise.
AN5	Make the Engagement Plan available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online.	The 2026/27 SHR Engagement Plan is available online at: Engagement plan from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 | Scottish Housing Regulator
CH1	Annually submit an Annual Return on the Charter in accordance with published guidance.	The Comhairle's ARC return was submitted to the SHR on 21 May 26.
CH5	Make SHR's Landlord Report easily accessible to tenants, including online.	SHR Information on the Comhairle is available at: Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - Western Isles Council | Scottish Housing Regulator
EH1	Be assured and have evidence that equality and human rights issues are considered properly in: · decision-making · the design and review of internal and external policies · day-to-day service delivery.	Homeless and Housing Services falls under the wider Comhairle policies on equalities and human rights. The Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2025-29 may be found here: Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2025-2029 The Equality Outcomes Progress Report is reported every two years and the latest version (2025) may be found here: Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2023
EH2	Collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for existing and new tenants; people on waiting lists; governing board members and staff. Local authorities must also collect data on protected characteristics for people who apply to them as homeless. Landlords who provide gypsy/traveller sites must collect data on protected characteristics for these service users.	Relevant data on protected characteristics collected on Homeless applications.
LR4	Each landlord must ensure it has effective arrangements to learn from complaints and from other tenant and service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance	Comhairle Complaints procedure in place and available at: Complaints | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar