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## ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2021

On behalf of the Management Committee of Lister Housing Co-operative, I give assurance that to the best of our knowledge, Lister complies with:

- all of the relevant requirements set out at chapter 3 of the Framework;
- all relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter;
- all relevant legislative duties; and
- the Standards of Governance and Financial Management.

We have made this assessment having seen and considered appropriate evidence to support the level of assurance we and yourselves desire. We are also keeping under close review the considerable impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic upon us, our tenants, our contractors and others. We believe we continue to follow local and national guidelines in respect of Covid-19.

Our Management Committee has held virtual meetings in the last 18 months and in October 2021 we have re-started with a blended part face-to-face and part online meeting. We held a very successful live AGM and SGM in late September and conducted the required business fully. The SGM approved the move to the 2020 Model Rules (Co-op version) and we will shortly process this to the FCA and notify yourselves when they give us approval. Our office has re-opened (with H&S measures) to the public in mid-September.

We continue to have a 100% gas safety check record, with only 1 delayed for a short period due to a tenant self-isolating, as Notified to yourselves. We are proud of our contractors' efforts to maintain the service to our tenants, aided by the support of our staff and Committee. We believe we are on target to comply as best we can with the deadlines for whole-house electric checks and smoke detector systems that meet the new legislation, subject to obtaining access from tenants. We are doing all we can to promote these programmes and ensure access wherever possible. We have made kitchen renewals conditional on having this work done first, which is a good spur to action.

We are building up our capacity with our contractors to tackle the difficult issues of improving the energy efficiency and EPC rating of our hard-to-heat, hard-to-treat, pre-1919 tenemental properties. We have built up a range of solutions to apply where appropriate but a primary difficulty remains of obtaining tenant access and support for work that is more intrusive or disruptive, for example whole-house floor insulation to flats with solid concrete floors. Much of this work had been delayed during the peak Covid period however, we are achieving more success with access by combining the work with the kitchen upgrade programme, where possible. We can already say we will struggle to fully achieve EESSH2 compliance to B-rating levels given our properties and various legislative, physical and technical difficulties.

Established 1976.

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A member of the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and Employers in Voluntary Housing.

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On the topics of Equalities and Human Rights we believe we comply with the law and we endeavour to comply with the Regulatory Framework. We are working through the guidance on Equalities data gathering and are planning how best to carry out this survey work, bearing in mind data protection legislation. We wish to gather useful information on these aspects to assist in improving and targeting service provision in the future to any specific identified needs of our tenants and customers. We have collaborated closely with our ARCHIE colleagues to share ideas for good practice. In relation to those on the housing list we understand our EdIndex partners will be working through how to achieve these objectives in relation to that application process to the common housing register.

We are awaiting guidance in relation to Human Rights and Housing and we will study this when it is produced and consider it carefully in relation our services, policies and interactions with our tenants, applicants and customers.

In relation to the retiral of our Director and the recruitment of a new CEO, we are well advanced and will Notify yourselves formally when this has been achieved contractually. We are operating a carefully planned handover process following the rigorous independent Options Appraisal. We have every hope that the new CEO will work well with the Committee, staff and tenants to continue the good work of the co-operative into the future.

As you know our efforts to become a charity whilst remaining a co-operative have been stymied by an external agency. Whilst this is very disappointing and inconsistent, we have decided to accept the position for now and concentrate on other matters. We feel very strongly that this bureaucratic decision goes against what many leading political and economic development bodies have espoused in support of co-operatives. We had carefully sought advice and assistance from all the key bodies in such a change. Good relations have been promoted with all of these (bar one) in the process, which may be useful should this topic come up again in the future.

Overall, we do not believe that we are materially non-compliant in any significant way and we continue to use an internal Action Plan to progress actions arising from this AS review process.

This statement was agreed by the Management Committee at its meeting of 26 October 2021 and signed by the new Chair-person, Louise Alexander.

26 October 2021

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