



West Granton

Housing Co-op

sustaining and championing the co-operative way

WGHC ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2021

**By the Committee of Management of
West Granton Housing Co-operative**

OCTOBER 2021

As a registered social landlord (RSL), West Granton Housing Co-operative is required to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) before 31st October 2021. This is the second Annual Assurance Statement.

The SHR has not been prescriptive about how this Statement should look. We therefore welcome your feedback including any suggestions about the format and content of our future Assurance Statements. You can contact a member of staff who will be happy to discuss this with you. Our contact details are below:

Telephone 0131 551 5035

mail@westgrantonhc.co.uk

This statement is publicly available. It is also on our website:
www.westgrantonhousing.coop Any interested party may ask for further information on the supporting evidence relating to any of the assurances given in this document.

This statement may be made available in other languages and formats free of charge. Please contact a member of staff if you, or anyone you know, would benefit from this.



WEST GRANTON HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED
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West Granton Housing Co-operative Limited is a fully mutual co-operative housing association registered as a social landlord with the Scottish Housing Regulator (HAC 225); and is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (2357 RS).



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Our Assurance Statement covers the following areas:

Registered Social Landlord Requirement	Compliance Status	Relevant Comments
All relevant regulatory requirements as set out in Section 3 of the Regulatory Framework	compliant	Compliance review of Regulatory Standards 1 and 3 was carried out by our Internal Auditors in January 2020. There are no outstanding actions. The 2021 Audit recommended 2 low level actions in regard to the updating of financial procedures, which have been completed.
Assurance and Notification	compliant	WGHC has completed year 2 of its 3 year Internal Audit Plan with its Internal Auditors, Wylie Bisset, to assist with ongoing self-assessment. WGHC has submitted all Notifiable Events as required (for example, closure of office in March 2020 to the public, due to Covid)
The relevant standards of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	compliant	WGHC has submitted a copy of its Annual Performance Report on the Charter for 2020-21 to SHR and to tenants.
Whistleblowing	compliant	WGHC has information on its website advising how to report a significant failure to SHR and has details in both the Governance and Complaints Policies.
Constitutional Requirements	compliant	WGHC held an SGM in Sept 2021 to adopt the 2020 Model Rules. Submission to the FCA has taken place and a NE declared with SHR. WGHC are currently awaiting formal approval from the FCA.
Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management	compliant	WGHC successfully recruited a Governance and Compliance Manager in January 2021 to ensure ongoing compliance with these standards.
Our statutory obligations in respect of tenant and resident safety, housing and homelessness and equalities and human rights.	compliant	WGHC is continuing work on its Equalities Framework Action Plan. Further details are provided on page 3.

WGHC Assurance Statement Declaration

I, Wendy Riordan, Chairperson of West Granton Housing Co-operative (WGHC), for and behalf of the Committee of Management of the Co-operative, confirm that:

- We have reviewed and considered various reports and evidence (including those of our Internal and External Auditors);
- We have reviewed and considered supporting statements contained within our Committee Reports and their linkage with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Standards;
- We have been presented with the WGHC electronic evidence bank in support of the approval and signing of WGHC's Annual Assurance Statement; this is a running agenda item at our Committee Meetings;
- We are satisfied WGHC has identified areas where it can continue to further improve, develop or enhance existing services, policies and procedures, however, none of which result in non-compliance; or are of a material or significant performance failure;
- We have recently become members of Scotland Excel with a view to engaging their services to ensure our ongoing compliance with Procurement Regulations and devise an improvement plan specifically for WGHC. We are also members of the Scottish Procurement Alliance have used their specialist services and support to call-off frameworks for component replacement programmes.
- We are satisfied we are fully compliant with the new Tolerable Standard for fire and carbon monoxide detection.
- Our Complaints Handling Policy is now up to date and compliant with the new SPSO Model Policy - required by the date of April 2021;
- We are satisfied that we took into the account the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and consequent business, economic and social disruption. We complied fully with the temporary changes in legislation. We submitted a Notifiable Event to the SHR. Our office re-opened to the public and full services resumed September 2021.
- We are continuing to work and strive towards ensuring that all our services comply with equality and human rights law, the regulatory framework and guidance produced by national bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

As part of our governance system, we are working towards implementing our equality policy objectives into practice. We aim to do this procedurally through our equality action plan, as well as specialist equality procedures. Our procedures include carrying out detailed equality impact assessments (EIAs) of organisational policies, procedures and other documentation. Our equality action plan and EIAs take account of human rights issues and this forms part of the equality mainstreaming process.

More recently, we have established an internal equality data collection procedure that is based on the National Guidance, 2021. This procedure has been aligned to our data protection procedures to ensure that personal data is processed in line with statutory provisions.

- We secured the services of a Welfare Rights Officer and a Debt Advisor specifically for our tenants through a joint working partnership arrangement with ARCHIE.
- We secured funding from the Community Recovery Fund, through a joint bid with ARCHIE, which allowed us to give away 25 Chromebooks to our tenants to help promote digital inclusion during the pandemic and also give away 50 bags of energy saving products to help with fuel poverty. In addition, we secured additional funding which allowed us to offer each tenant a cash payment to assist with their fuel bills and the remaining funds were used to set up a dedicated WGHC Fuel Assistance Fund for our tenants. This is in addition to the WGHC Tenancy Sustainment Fund.
- We held a successful SGM in September 2021 to ask the membership to vote on the adoption of the 2020 Model Rules. We submitted a Notifiable Event to SHR to report this constitutional change. We held a successful AGM immediately following the SGM.
- We will continue to monitor our rental income and budgets in the context of the ongoing situation.
- We continue to meet our covenants with our lender and they reduced their information requirements from us as part of their annual review.
- Our Business Plan reflects the regulatory guidance advice that was current at the time of its approval.

In light of the above we believe, to the best of our knowledge, that WGHC is compliant in all the areas, as set out in the Assurance Standards requirements. WGHC will keep this statement under review and will notify the Scottish Housing Regulator and our tenants if our compliance status changes in any of the above areas. This statement was agreed at our Committee of Management meeting on 20th October 2021. Signed on behalf of the WGHC Committee of Management:

 Date: 20th October 2021
Wendy Riordan, WGHC Chairperson