



# Housing Annual Report 2010-2011

This Annual Report can be made available in other languages and formats.

On request information can be made available in Braille, on tape, in large print and in different languages

(русский, 汉语, evsjy, Polski, ภาษาไทย).

For further information please telephone Housing on 01595 744360, or email [housing@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:housing@shetland.gov.uk)

## Policies that affect you



SIC Housing policies are available online at:

[www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/policyandprocedures](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/policyandprocedures)

## Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Government is looking to develop a Housing Charter that will look after the interests of tenants and housing applicants across Scotland.

It is intended that the first national charter will come into effect in April 2012.

Further information is available online at <http://housingcharter.scotland.gov.uk/>

## Introduction

It is a legal requirement that we publish performance information annually. The report is published online at [www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/Statistics.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/Statistics.asp) and paper copies can be provided on request by contacting the Housing Service.

## Scottish Housing Regulator

Following an improvement progress inspection carried out in 2011, Councillor Allison Duncan, Vice-Chair of the Social Services Committee was "absolutely delighted that the housing regulator has identified some major improvements in the Council's performance since 2007". The improvements made include strengthened information on housing need and good supporting strategies as well as improvements in the repairs service, temporary accommodation and in tackling homelessness. The full inspection report is available online at [www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk](http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk)



## Local Housing Strategy

The SIC Housing Service has worked with partners and consulted across Shetland during 2011 to complete a five year Local Housing Strategy. This is available to view online at [www.shetland.gov.uk/lhs](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/lhs)

The 2011-2016 Local Housing Strategy sets the future direction for public and private housing policy in Shetland. Councillors and representatives of other agencies have been involved in developing the five main priorities, which are:

- Future supply of housing in Shetland;
- Fuel Poverty;
- Housing Support/Housing for an ageing population;
- Homelessness;
- Private Sector Housing.

The Strategy is underpinned by an evidence base that was approved by the Scottish Government in September 2010 and is also available to view online at [www.shetland.gov.uk/hnda](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/hnda)

## Applying for Housing



The SIC and Hjaltrand Housing Association operate a joint housing register, this means that filling out one housing application form places you on the list with both landlords. You can choose to be considered for only one landlord if you prefer. Both landlords consider your application in line with their own allocation policies. To apply for housing, please contact either Landlord directly or go online to [www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/)

If you think your home is too big for you and you would like to transfer to a smaller house, you may be eligible for a payment of £700 to help with the cost of moving. This is available to tenants living in Lerwick, Scalloway, Tingwall, Bressay and Cunningsburgh only.

If you would consider swapping your house with another SIC or HHA tenant, take a look at [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk) to register for a Mutual Exchange.

For further advice and information on housing, visit our **Housing Options Guide** at [www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/)

## Homelessness

Homelessness presentations in Shetland have

Year	Number
2009/2010	263
2010/2011	271

increased steadily since 2005. The numbers here give an indication of the numbers presenting as homeless over the past 2 years. For further information please see our Homeless Factsheet at [www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/Statistics.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/Statistics.asp)

## Personal Housing Advice

Personal housing advice is available to assist anyone looking for a home to explore the full range of housing options in Shetland. This can open up a range of housing possibilities that previously might not have been considered. Staff carry out a full assessment of a households circumstances and can help them consider their long-term housing aspirations.

Further information is available online at [www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/)

## Housing Applications

The number of housing applications made each year continues to be high. The numbers of applicants waiting for a home has decreased 5% since 2009/10.

Year	No of new applicants	No of applicants on the housing list (April)
2009-2010	718	853
2010-2011	725	812

## SIC Housing stock

The SIC housing stock has decreased by 1% since 2009/10. Further information on the location of council housing stock can be found at:

[www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/councilhousing/documents/TableA-March2011GNProperties.pdf](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/councilhousing/documents/TableA-March2011GNProperties.pdf)

Year	Total stock	General Needs	Sheltered or non-traditional sheltered let	Other
2010-2011	1896	1445	300	151

## Number of lets 2010/11

In 2010/11 there were 166 SIC properties let across Shetland. The majority (45%) of these were in Lerwick, followed by North and North Isles. There were also 49 successful nominations from the SIC to Hjaltrand Housing Association tenancies. Homeless applicants were allocated through 53% of these nominations.

Area	Number of lets	Percentage of all lets
Central	10	6%
Lerwick & Bressay	75	45%
North	33	20%
North Isles	17	10%
South	15	9%
West	8	5%
Whalsay & Skerries	7	4%
No grouping	1	0.5%



## Turnover of Empty Properties

In 2010/11 there was a 3% improvement in houses being relet within 4 weeks. The average time taken to relet houses improved by 9% (3 days). The percentage of rent lost overall because of empty properties increased by 0.3%.

Percentage of not low demand houses relet within 4 weeks	
2009-2010	2010-2011
65%	68%

Average time taken (days) to relet houses	
2009-2010	2010-2011
34	31

Percentage of rent lost due to empty homes	
2009-2010	2010-2011
1.9%	2.2%

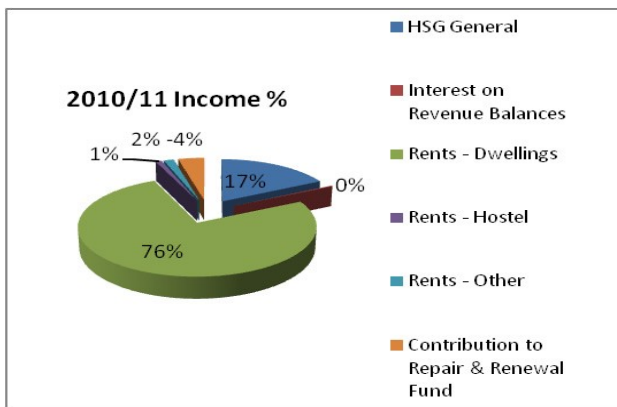
## Repairs Performance

Repairs performance improved in 2010/11 across most categories of repair. Greater efficiencies were achieved in 2010/11 by increasing the number of repairs ordered as Urgent instead of Emergency repairs. Improved working practices have also been put in place to increase the number of Routine repairs completed on time.

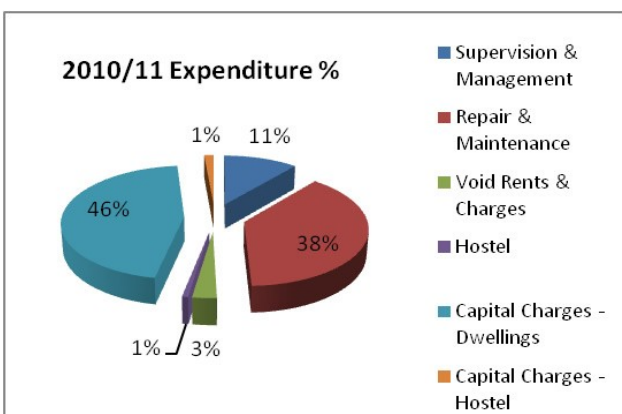
	Repair Type	Number of repairs completed	% completed on time	Better/Worse than previous year
<b>2009-2010</b>	Emergency (24 hours)	1267	99%	Better
	Urgent (3 days)	1802	93%	Better
	Routine (1 month)	4207	77%	Better
	3 month	672	71%	Better
<b>2010-2011</b>	Emergency (24 hours)	917	99%	Same
	Urgent (3 days)	2203	97%	Better
	Routine (1 month)	3820	76%	Worse
	3 month	801	74%	Better

## Housing Finance

Where our money comes from...



Where our money goes...



## How to pay your rent

You can pay your rent in lots of different ways:

- In person at the Cashiers Section at Charlotte House, Lerwick;
- Swipe Card at any Post Office,
- Any PayZone outlet;
- Direct Debit Online payments at [www.shetland.gov.uk/payments](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/payments)
- Salary deduction for Council employees.



## Rent Arrears and Housing Benefit

The Income and Recovery Section of SIC Finance collect all debts owed to the Shetland Islands Council. If you are falling behind with payments of Rent, Council Tax or any other type of Council debt please contact them. Together you can make an agreement of achievable payment instalments. They can also arrange a Benefits Health Check for you with the Citizens Advice Bureau, to check you are getting the benefits you may be entitled to.

The most important thing to remember is that things can be sorted out and help is available. Telephone SIC Finance on 01595 744682 or go online at [www.shetland.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/benefits).

## Shetland Tenants' Forum

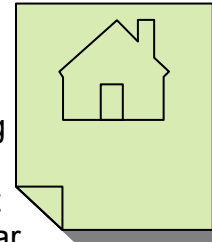
Based at 1a Water Lane the Shetland Tenants' Forum plays an important part in encouraging tenant involvement and participation throughout Shetland. Representatives of each of Shetland's tenants and residents groups form the membership of the Forum. The SIC provides funding to enable the Forum to employ a dedicated Tenant Participation Worker as well as run an independent office. The Tenant Participation Worker actively encourages and supports tenants to form tenants' groups and to take part in the Shetland Tenants' Forum.

There are currently 7 tenant groups operating in Shetland: Annsbrae Tenants Forum (Special Needs), Community Learning and Resident Centre, Kalliness and Soundside Residents Association, Moorfield Tenants and Residents Association, Sandveien & Norderdale Tenants and Residents Association, Scalloway Tenants and Residents Association and the Scheme Three Tenants and Residents Association.

For more details about the associations, please go to [www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/tenants-forum.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housingoptionsguide/tenants-forum.asp) or contact Joann Johnson at the Shetland Tenants' Forum office on 01595 695197 or by email at [joann@shetlandtf.plus.com](mailto:joann@shetlandtf.plus.com).



## Responding to your complaints



We are committed to providing a high quality service to our tenants and it is important that we have the opportunity to hear your complaints so that we can work together to resolve these.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you have received often the simplest and quickest way to get things sorted out is to speak directly to the person responsible for delivering the service.

If this does not resolve the matter, you can make a formal complaint in writing, by telephone, in person, by email or through our website at [www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/HowtomakeaComplaint.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/HowtomakeaComplaint.asp).

We log all formal complaints and this helps us to keep track of your concerns and how they are dealt with. We aim to send a written response to complaints within 10 working days. If we are unable to respond fully within this timescale, we will let you know and explain the reasons why.

If you are not satisfied with the final outcome of your complaint, you can take the matter further through the Chief Executive of the Shetland Islands Council. If you remain dissatisfied after completing the SIC formal complaints process then you can also complain to the independent Scottish Public Services Ombudsman at [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk).

## Contact Details

Shetland Islands Council  
Development Services—Housing  
6 North Ness Business Park  
Lerwick  
Shetland  
ZE1 0LZ

Telephone: 01595 744360  
Repairs: 01595 744399  
Freephone: 0800 212829  
Fax: 01595 744395  
email: [housing@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:housing@shetland.gov.uk)  
website: [www.shetland.gov.uk/housing](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing)

Our office is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm including lunchtime.



In an emergency **out of office** hours please contact:

Homelessness: 01595 695611  
Council house repairs: 01595 693972